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In Business Update Page 18
Pages 24-25 Spring LLANTWIT MAJOR Feature

Trader loses licence to sell alcohol

A PORTHCAWL shopkeeper has lost his personal licence, after pleading guilty to selling alcohol to a child.

In a case brought by Bridgend County Borough Council's Trading Standards department, Bridgend Magistrates Court was told how Xavier Ignesious Regington was the licence holder at Nick's Stores, 4 The Precinct, Rest Bay, when a 15-year-old boy was sold four cans of Strongbow cider.

In fact, the boy was acting as a volunteer in a joint Trading Standards and South Wales Police test purchase, following complaints that youngsters were able to purchase alcohol at the defendant's shop.

When the test purchase was made, the volunteer was sold the alcohol, without being questioned or challenged to prove his age.

During the subsequent investigation, it was established that Regington had no systems in place at the premises to prevent underage sales being made, and had tried to hide the fact by providing Police and Trading Standards officers with falsified records to suggest that staff had been trained.

After pleading guilty to charges under the Licensing Act 2003, Regington was sentenced to a £500 fine and was ordered to pay £1,406.08 in costs.

The court also revoked his personal licence, meaning that he can no longer supervise premises selling alcohol.

Passing sentence, District Judge Neale Thomas described how the child volunteer had looked nowhere near 18 – yet in the space of a few minutes, he had been served alcohol, in contravention of licensing laws.

District Judge Thomas concluded that he was satisfied, in light of the defendant's previous convictions, both in the UK and abroad, that he should not hold a personal licence, and ordered its forfeiture.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

PORTHCAWL STUDENTS LINE UP A UK CONSUMERS' TITLE

The comprehensive's winning team, Felicity Williamson-Sarll, Nathaniel King, Jack Bridger and Matthew Dang, with teacher Sarah-Jane James and Trading Standards Institute chief executive, Leon Livermore.

PUPILS from Porthcawl Comprehensive have won a consumer rights competition in Cardiff, taking them to the UK finals of Young Consumers of the Year.

Year-12 students Jack Bridger, Matthew Dang, Nathaniel King and Felicity Williamson-Sarll defeated eight schools from around Wales to be crowned Young Consumers of the Year 2015 at the Welsh final held at Cardiff City Stadium.

The UK final, co-ordinated by the Trading Standards Institute, will be held in June in London, and Bridgend county borough is being represented at this stage of the competition for the fourth year running.

Teams of four secondary school pupils compete against each other in a University Challenge-style consumer-based quiz, which includes questions on consumer and legal affairs, credit and finance, and social responsibility.

Porthcawl Comprehensive reached the regional finals after winning a closely-contested Bridgend county borough final hosted by Trading Standards last November, against nine other local secondary schools.

BCBC's Trading Standards Service will now work closely with the team to prepare them for the UK final, where they will face the champions from the English and Scottish regional competitions. Porthcawl Comprehensive will also be joined by Chepstow School, whose team finished as runners up, in representing Wales at the national final.

Supporting Porthcawl Comprehensive, was teacher Sarah-Jane James, who said: "The students invested a lot of their time in to this competition and it really has paid off. Winning the Welsh final is a magnificent achievement and I know the team will now focus on becoming UK champions in June.

"It was an unforgettable two days for me and the pupils, but more importantly, we now have a much greater understanding of our consumer rights and responsibilities."

The competition was preceded by a tour of the Senedd in Cardiff Bay, where the students were able to watch a plenary session and even enjoyed a 30-minute question and answer session with Wales' First Minister, Carwyn Jones.

Mr Jones, of course, is the AM for Bridgend, was full of praise for the winning team: "My congratulations go to Porthcawl Comprehensive for their magnificent achievement. It was clear to me when I met all of the teams that this was going to be a close competition, so these students have shown their mettle by beating off some stiff opposition.

"I wish both Porthcawl and Chepstow schools the best of luck when they compete in London this summer, and hope they can bring the title back to Wales."

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'LONG LIVE THE WELSH NHS!'

– says GEM reader

AFTER severe criticisms from the Prime Minister about the Welsh NHS, I thought I would like to share with you my experience of one of the NHS services.

In October 2014, I had to attend the doctor's surgery for a pulled muscle in my foot. After this was seen to, and due to my age, Dr Jones (just retired) insisted I have a prostate blood test, although I had no symptoms.

A week later, I was sent for and was advised to have a biopsy.

This came as a great shock but I had my biopsy two weeks later, and it was confirmed by the consultant at the Princess of Wales Hospital that I did have prostate cancer.

I was immediately given hormonal treatment at the hospital, then via my GP in the form of an injection in my stomach at £300 per injection, of which I needed two.

In November 2014, I had an appointment at Velindre Hospital, Cardiff, and a programme of treatment was explained.

The radiotherapy treatment started on February 19 2015 and was completed on March 20.

The treatment was given in a thoughtful, efficient and professional manner, and on time. On the one occasion that the machine broke down, I was telephoned at home before leaving for my appointment and a new appointment arranged. The support verbally or given through leaflets was second to none, and went a long way to dispel my own and my family's fears.

At the time of writing, I have already received my check-up appointment to see the consultant at the Princess of Wales Hospital in June.

I think the treatment I received was first class and would encourage all men over 50 years of age to go to their GP for a blood test. The earlier the detection, the better the outcome.

Long live the Welsh NHS in its present form, from a very grateful 75-year-old.
J L Jones,
Aberthin.

Remembering the beginning of Nazi downfall...

APRIL 2015 is a significant month of anniversaries – the birthday, and then suicide, of the late unlamented Adolf Hitler 70 years ago, and the beginning of the battle of Berlin – the final, successful assault by the Red (Russian) Army on the Nazi capital, and its subsequent destruction.

A Soviet war correspondent with Zhukhov's forces asked: "What are the targets?"

"Centre of Berlin," answered a Katyusha Battery commander.

Then came the words of command: "Open fire on the capital of Fascist Germany".

I noted the time – it was exactly 8.30am on April 22. 96 Shells and rockets fell in the centre of Berlin in the course of a few minutes.

From this one battery alone, 20,000 Russians were to die in the nex few days before the 'Hammer and Sickle' was hoisted over the Reichstag.

Then the 'revenge' began. The Soviets, according to historian Max Hastings, killed 93 per cent of all Germans and their allies in World War Two. I believe this to be a slight over-estimate.

Christopher Short (*ex-RAF Regiment and MI***).**

Medical centre was a success

PENCOED Bridgend Division of St John Cymru Wales would like to express our gratitude to South Wales Police, the Street Pastor team and Hope Baptist church for all their recent support during the Six Nations rugby tournament.

With their help,we were able to set up a medical help centre at Hope Baptist Church for each of the Wales game nights. The aim of the centre was to provide medical support to the public while they celebrated or commiserated over the various games that occurred.

By treating patients in town we were able to avoid the majority having to go to Accident and Emergency; when it was necessary, we were able to transport ourselves, thus not tying up an emergency ambulance.

Finally, and not least, we would like to thank all of our volunteers for the time they gave up to staff the medical centre and to patrol the streets of Bridgend.

P Wiggins,
Public Relations, Pencoed Bridgend Division, St John Cymru Wales.

Children's programme in the running for NHS award

Rebecca Jones.

A PIONEERING programme is making a huge difference to hundreds of young Bridgend children whose language and talking skills are not as good as they should be.

More than half of all two-year-olds in the county's most deprived wards have delayed language skills, which can cause problems later on in life.

Now a screening and intervention programme to identify these children and provide early support has made such a dramatic difference it has been shortlisted for this year's NHS Wales Awards.

The programme was developed by ABMU Flying Start specialist speech and language therapist Rebecca Jones.

Flying Start is the Welsh Government early years programme for families with children under four years, living in disadvantaged areas. It includes 12 months of free nursery-based childcare for youngsters aged two.

Rebecca said: "In line with the national trend, Flying Start children in Bridgend enter nursery with significantly delayed language skills. Before this project many of these children were referred to the speech and language therapy service (SALT) for intervention.

"However, most of them didn't have a specific disorder requiring specialist intervention and instead needed early intervention within their own environments.

"In addition, appointment attendance was historically poor, meaning the children's needs were unmet," she explained.

Delayed language skills can not only affect a child's education, but could lead to serious problems later on in life.

Research has shown that, without effective help, a third of children with speech, language and communication difficulties will need treatment for mental health problems as adults.

Also, 60 per cent of young offenders have previously unidentified language and communication difficulties.

To help avoid any of these problems, the SALT team launched a project to screen all Bridgend Flying Start two-year-olds when they start nursery.

It started in September, 2012, after months of planning.

Rebecca went on: "We found that up to 60 per cent of the children have difficulties with their language development requiring additional support. This is provided through structured intervention planned by Flying Start speech and language therapists, and delivered by nursery staff.

"Each child is screened three times during their 12 months in a Flying Start nursery so their progress can be monitored."

The project has been shortlisted in the Promoting Better Health and Avoiding Disease category of the NHS Wales Awards. The winners will be announced during a ceremony on July 15.

NEW DRAMA CLUB TO SET UP IN BRIDGEND

Jonathan comes home to give boost to young talent!

A BRIDGEND-born actor, Jonathan Floyd, has returned to his home town to pass on his skills and knowledge to a new generation of aspiring young actors and singers.

He has appeared in TV dramas like Hotel Babylon, Holby City, Hearts of Gold and Caerdydd, as well as in Bridgend-born playwright Gary Owen's Off-Broadway play *Ghost City*, and has already been working with pupils at his old school, Bryntirion Comprehensive.

He has been teaching GCSE and A-level drama students, as well as directing their last two musicals – *Annie* and the *Wizard of Oz*.

Now, Jonathan is setting up a Little Voices centre based at the school, which will offer drama and singing lessons for young people aged four to 18 years.

Jonathan Floyd.

Jonathan has 15 years' experience in working with young people in the performing arts. He has taught in Wales, London, the Middle East and Nigeria, where he lived for four years. He has also worked with the Sherman Theatre in Cardiff.

He said: "This is a great opportunity for the young people of Bridgend who love to act and sing to benefit from the framework which Little Voices offers. The class sizes are kept small to give each child individual attention.

"Pupils will work towards the external examinations awarded by the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA). The higher grade exams can contribute UCAS points for university entry.

"We are launching on Tuesday, April 14, with a second night on Wednesday, April 15 with a free trial session for everyone who applies through the website. Lessons will be held at the school's newly re-fitted Lle Ddysgu/Oriel."

Groups are organised by friendship, age and ability covering various age groups from four to 18.

Johnny added: "I was born and brought up in Bridgend and my family still live here so it does feel like I am coming home to my roots."

Anyone who wants to find out more can contact him on jonny@littlevoices.org.uk (or ring him on 02920 212863 or 0791 438 3806). The website to apply for a place is www.littlevoices.org.uk/bridgend.

Easter egg hunts at Bryngarw

FROM April 3-6, families will be able to join Easter egg hunts around Bryngarw House and Country Park, collecting chocolate treats as they go. There will be hunts at 10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm and 2pm on all four days and groups will need to collect their map from the visitor centre at Brynmenyn.

They will be led by street theatre performers from La La La Productions, to the newly refurbished Bryngarw House, where the children will collect their last egg and take part in an Easter themed arts and craft activity.

Tickets cost £5 per child, with children aged under three admitted free of charge with a paying sibling. Tickets can be bought in advance from the Grand Pavilion box office on 01656 815995, or by visiting www.grandpavilion.co.uk and clicking on the 'buy tickets' link.

Find out more about Bryngarw House and Country Park at www.bryngarwhouse.co.uk.

Bridgend Quiz League news

SEASON 2014-15 ended on March 23 with the KO Cup and Plate finals, which were well-attended and competed for.

The KO Cup was won by the League champions Penybont Explorers with a decisive win, 86-54 against Laleston Inn 'A'. The Plate final was a victory for Crown Inn 'A' over Laleston Inn 'B' by 59 points to 32.

Next season will begin in early September. It is expected that all 19 teams will be involved again and any new teams wishing to take part will be made most welcome.The two teams with the first name Penybont will be known next season as Bryntirion Explorers and Bryntirion Nomads.

A Rudge (for Quiz League)

HIGH TIDE TIMES

(UNTIL APRIL 9)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
02 Thur	06.19	8.9	18.37	9.1
03 Fri	06.54	9.3	19.11	9.5
04 Sat	07.25	9.5	19.44	9.7
05 Sun	07.58	9.8	20.14	9.7
06 Mon	08.28	9.6	20.44	9.6
07 Tues	08.58	9.5	21.13	9.7
08 Wed	09.31	9.4	21.47	9.3
09 Thur	09.59	9.2	22.21	9.1

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should check with a tide table specific to their location.

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100 YEARS AGO, SUNNY CALM BEFORE THE STORM...

Porthcawl enjoys brief Easter lull before war clouds darken the town

BY CERI JOSEPH

Ceri continues her account of life in Porthcawl during WWI. This week, April, 1915.

"ALL the hotels are full and there is every likelihood of us having a steady season at Porthcawl." (Porthcawl News April 1, 1915.)

Easter had been early that year, yet the weather proved fine, bringing in a large number of people by train and by road, to enjoy the sunshine.

"When we look around and see the state of the country, aye! It is indeed wonderful." (Porthcawl News 1st April, 1915)

Indeed, Porthcawl was fortuitous that Easter as the effects of the war were soon to escalate. Although it may have been 'golf as usual' at Porthcawl, in the same month the Professional Golfers' Association announced that the Open Championship was to be cancelled until the war was over. The next championship was to be held at Deal. In 1920, the championships were held at the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club, Deal.

However, that same year the responsibility for the championships was handed over to the Royal and Ancient Golf Club; where it has remained ever since.

Porthcawl, as with the rest of the country, was beginning to feel the pinch regarding the provision of certain foods. Bread was a prime example. The price of wheat had risen to its highest for 30 years, which with yeast prices also rising 50 per cent, severely affected the price of bread.

Concern over the price was such that it became the custom to have bread delivered to your house and weighed before buying.

It became illegal to sell bread otherwise than by weight. Heating and cooking was also affected, with coal prices rising 25 er cent.

Overall though, the economy of Porthcawl was in better shape than most towns due to its tourism and, of course, the continual influx of troops. Apart from the 18th Battalion Welsh Regiment already in the town, billeted at a cost of 17/6p per man per week, April saw the arrival of 800 men of the 3rd Welsh Regiment encamped at Newton.

Despite the men being under canvas, it meant the expenditure of more money in the town. *'The shopkeepers ought to get the benefit of the military movement.'* (Glamorgan Gazette April 30, 1915.)

Throughout the war, Porthcawlians and the lives of the soldiers became inextricably linked in various ways. Sadly, none more so than hearing of the death of 2nd Lieutenant Arthur Evans, of the 18th Battalion, Welsh Regiment who, while riding his motorcycle, was killed near Pyle on March 31.

While descending a hill, his front wheel got caught in a rut and he lost control of his machine. He was taken to Edward VII Hospital, Cardiff, where he later died; 2nd Lt Evans, an architect from Aberystwyth, had joined the battalion four weeks previously, and had only gained his promotion the week before.

His commanding officer later said that he was a capable officer who was eager to get to the front. His body was returned to Aberystwyth for burial. He was 23.

News of Porthcawl boys who had reached the front was being received more regularly. Private Fred Davies, 2nd Battalion RWF, later 3, George Street, who had been present at the Christmas Truce in December, wrote following the Battle of Neuve Chapelle: *"It is a bit quiet all along the line this last day or two, so we are having, as it were, a little holiday."*

Previously he had written, "For goodness sake, send me something to kill these damn lice." Private Davies had joined the 3rd Battalion, Royal Welch Fusiliers (Special Reserves) in Chester, November 6, 1908.

Attached to the 2nd Battalion, he was posted to France in November 1914. On April 30, 1915 Fred was admitted to a field hospital with a weakening muscle condition, possibly caused by long periods in the trenches. He was discharged in August 1915.

In January 1917 he was shamed into applying for his silver badge: "I wish to apply for a silver badge to be worn on the lapel of my coat, to show that I have done my duty towards my king and country."

The introduction of the silver badge was to protect men who had served from being misjudged as shirkers. Private Fred Davies received his badge in February that year.

Captain Charles Alan Smith Morris.

Royal Porthcawl Golf Club.

2nd Lieutenant Arthur Evans.

Private Fred Davies.

News of another Porthcawl soldier reached home in April: 2nd Lieutenant Charles Alan Smith Morris, 2nd Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment had been wounded by shrapnel in the knee, during the Battle of Neuve Chapelle on March 12, 1915.

Charles, of Clevis House, Porthcawl (Part of St Clare's School today) was taking his degree at Pembroke College when war broke out. He joined as an officer cadet and was posted to France, landing on March 5 1915.

Returning to Britain, he was fit again by the end of May and was posted to Salonika. Landing in Salonika on November 18, 1915, he was attached to the 5th Royal Irish Fusiliers who were being rebuilt after suffering heavy losses at Gallipoli.

The survivors numbered just 280, so with the addition of 350 Bedfordshires swelling their ranks, the men were divided into companies, with at least one Bedford officer per company.

As part of the restructuring, the 20-year-old 2nd Lieutenant Morris found himself in command of a company, despite having only seen around 24 hours of service on a front line previously.

During a counter attack against the Bulgarians on December 7, he was shot in the shoulder. After his second bout of treatment, Charles returned to the French front lines in September 1916.

Having been promoted, Captain Morris was given the command of a raiding party just two days after arriving at the Somme. Following months of trench routines, Charles' battalion was, eventually, engaged in the Battle of Arras, being given the all but impossible task of assaulting German positions at La Coulotte on April 23, 1917.

"Captain Charles Morris, in command of B Company, was killed whilst he rallied his men and led another attack from the front against the machine guns dominating the second trench line." (Extracts taken from '1st Bedfordshires. Part Two; Arras to the Armistice'.)

Acting Major Morris was, initially, reported as having been killed on April 23, but some months later, when his personal effects were returned home, via the Red Cross, it was confirmed that he had died at a German Field Hospital at Evin, Malmaison on May 7, 1917 aged 21.

In 1919, it was Charles' father, also Charles Morris, who wrote a £100 cheque, to enable Porthcawlians to afford the War Memorial that it has today.

Towards the end of April, Porthcawl suffered a scare: a coastwatcher, while on duty between Sker and Porthcawl, came across eight foreign sailors walking along the coast.

They were marched to the police station, where it transpired that they were from a French vessel docked at Port Talbot.

Prior to this event, rumours of German spies had been prevalent, which had further been fuelled by an order from the Admiralty that *"all lights in coastal towns visible from the sea are to be extinguished. It would give a hostile craft, if any appeared, a capital indication as to the position of the town."* (Glamorgan Gazette April 16, 1915.)

Join me next month to read how Porthcawlians coped with the tragic loss of three local men who were killed on May 13, 1915.

CERI JOSEPH, Porthcawl Museum.

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Stagecoach students wow audience in the West End

ON Sunday, March 22 students from Stagecoach Theatre Arts School in Bridgend and Cowbridge gave a show-stopping performance based on the musical *Ghost* at her Majesty's Theatre in London's West End.

Students from 17 Stagecoach schools around the country took to the stage, treating the audience to a range of theatrical and musical pieces. The programme included numbers from the soulful musical, *Blues Brothers* and classic hits from the enchanting show, *Wicked*.

Stagecoach Principal, Helene Reynolds said: "I am delighted that pupils from my schools had the opportunity to perform at this iconic venue. Everyone has had a brilliant time rehearsing for the production and it was great to see them on stage.

"Performances like this showcase the hard work of our students, providing them with memorable experiences and life skills which they can use throughout their careers."

Bridgend and Cowbridge Stagecoach School is part of a network of more than 600 part-time theatre arts schools worldwide. Early stages classes are available for children aged 4 to 6 and main stages classes take place for 6 to 18 year olds.

See the website www.stagecoach.co.uk/bridgend (or call 01446 772727).

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Former Brynteg pupil scoops a prestigious A-Level physics award

Left to right: Deborah McMillan, Director of Education at Bridgend County Borough Council; Dr David Cunnah, National Officer for Wales at the Institute of Physics; Lyn Evans, Director of the Linear Collider Collaboration; Dominic Manetta-Jones; Steve Jones, Head of physics and electronics at Brynteg School.

A HIGH-FLYING former Brynteg School pupil is celebrating this week – after scooping a prestigious award for excellence in his A-Level physics exam.

Dominic Manetta-Jones (19) was presented with the Goronwy Jones prize by Welsh scientist Lyn Evans, project leader for the Large Hadron Collider, during sixth form assembly on Friday morning.

Dominic scored the highest mark in Wales in the WJEC exam last summer, becoming the first-ever pupil from the school to win the accolade from the Institute of Physics in Wales.

He has since gone on to study medicine at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, after achieving A* grades in physics, maths mechanics, chemistry and biology.

The ceremony was attended by Dr David Cunnah, the National Officer for Wales at the Institute of Physics, and Deborah McMillan, Director of Education at Bridgend County Borough Council.

Dominic said: "I was told that I had achieved the highest score for physics after I had been back to school for the year meeting to pick up my A-Level certificates, and I was very pleased with this accolade. It was only a few weeks later that I was told that I would be receiving an award for it, and I felt very honoured indeed to see my name on a list on the Institute of Physics website.

"I'm extremely grateful for all the help and support I received from all of my teachers, especially Mr Jones and Mr Price, who engaged my interest in the subject and furthered my understanding of the concepts underlying the course.

"My message to current pupils would be to study A-Level subjects which genuinely interest them, because things will seem easier to understand!"

Dominic's former teacher Steve Jones, head of physics and electronics at Brynteg School, added: "Dominic is a particularly gifted and perceptive problem solver. While he was a hard-working pupil, he would often just think about a problem for some time before tackling it, and he would choose the most efficient way forward. He would often solve problems in a completely novel way.

"As well as this, he has a wicked and likeable sense of humour and he never seems to take himself too seriously. He was well liked by his peers during his time at the school."

Deborah McMillan, BCBC's Director of Education, added: "On behalf of the council, I would like to congratulate Dominic on his outstanding academic achievements, which have resulted in him winning this prestigious award.

"Thanks to his efforts, and the high quality teaching and learning environment fostered by Brynteg School, Dominic has shown current students that they can achieve anything in their chosen fields of study."

Nothing bookish about the friendly, relaxed U3A!

IN 2009, a book entitled *The U3A Story,* written by Francis Beckett, captured the amazing story of how the idea of U3A became an international reality.

Four main reasons were quoted to justify its creation: people living longer than ever before; not just living longer, but also living healthier lives; keeping their mental and physical abilities longer, largely due to the welfore state; and the way we now think about ourselves with greater expectations than ever before.

The orginal idea started in France. L'Universite du Troiseme Age (UTA) had been formed some nine years earlier in 1972 in Toulouse.

It was, from the outset, closely involved with French universities and is described as being like the British universities extramural departments which organised adult eductation classes in their local communities.

From these small beginnings, it is recorded that there are now 970 flourishing U3As in this country that have between them over 350,000 individual members.

Each U3A is essentially a cooperative of men and women no longer in full–time paid employment who share common interests and a desire to learn.

No qualifications are required or awarded. We are extremely fortunate in Porthcawl to have a vibrantly, active branch of this wonderful progressive movement. It is regrettable that the word university tends to put some people off joining, because it suggests to them academic subjects and qualifications. I was personally close to not joining because in retirement I was looking for a more relaxed life and the thought of joining academic study groups, however friendly, did not appeal.

Fortunately, I listened to friends who opened my eyes to the truth of what was on offer. Firstly, I received the warmest of welcomes wherever I went. I soon discovered that each individual member gets a personal monthly menu of events and can come and go as they please.

If you are computer literate, you even have direct access to an absolute Aladdin's cave of information by just typing 'Porthcawl U3A' into 'Google' or other search engine. What we are all about is carefully explained by just one 'click' on the first entry.

Several of our monthly talks held at the Hi Tide are also recorded which will show the viewer the high quality provided. Porthcawl U3A has in excess of 500 members who attend many of the 35 interest groups that are led by the friendliest of convenors.

Porthcawl U3A is essentially a 'for fun' organisation that always seeks to satify its members wishes. Far removed from the 'university' image this is a learning organisation proud to be, "by the people, for the people", and at the minimal cost of £35 per annum fee, there could not be a better investment.

For more information, telephone 01656 783663 or email cmorte@hotmail.com.

CLIVE MORT

Employers' calls for engineering apprenticeships

CONSERVATIVE parliamentary candidate for Bridgend, Meirion Jenkins, is supporting calls from local employers for more emphasis on engineering apprenticeships.

It follows a visit to the local firm TBD Owen Holland where he was joined by Alun Cairns, MP for Vale of Glamorgan and Under Secretary of State for Wales.

TBD manufacture aircraft handling equipment.

They met chief executive Steve Meredith, who founded the company back in 2003 with just two employees in a small workshop.

There are now 110 staff and a turnover of around £10 million.

Walkabout to give a boost to Welsh tourism

WELSH Tourism Week was celebrated from March 14-22 to raise the profile of the tourism industry in Wales and to highlight its revenue generating value and opportunities for jobs and careers.

Madeleine Moon (Labour) visited Parkdean, Trecco Bay Holiday Park in Porthcawl, one of the largest holiday parks in the UK.

She commented: "Tourism is a crucial industry here in the Bridgend county borough, and it is also one of Wales' most important industries, accounting for around 13 per cent of our nations GDP, a higher share than any of the other UK nations.

"I met with Karl Schmidtke, the regional director of Parkdean and had a walkabout in the holiday park in the glorious sunshine. Karl told me that last year they had over 26,000 bookings and catered for 400,000 visitors on the park.

"It was good to hear from Karl that 96 per cent of the staff employed are local and that he has developed a close working relationship with Bridgend College, giving work experience to students on a whole variety of courses, from electricians to caterers.

"I was impressed with the quality of all the venues that I saw and cleanliness of the site sending out a positive image of Porthcawl as a holiday destination.

"Karl also said they are fully booked for Easter and looking forward to a good season ahead."

CLIMBING STRAIGHT TO THE TOP!

FLT Sgt (ATC) Kevin Gould from 2117 (Kenfig Hill) Squadron Royal Air Force Cadets arranged an indoor climbing wall activity on March 28 for cadets and staff from Kenfig Hill, 2347 (Porthcawl) and 2426 (Pencoed) Squadrons.

The evening started with a warm-up session before climbers were kitted out with safety harness and helmets. Not all Cadets had climbed before and some didn't have a head for heights – but with teamwork everyone gave the wall a try and some even amazed themselves on how well they did.

This is only one of many activities you could be involved in by joining the RAF Air Cadets.

If you are aged between 12 and in Year-8 up to the age of 17, male or female, come along and see what we can offer.

You can contact the Squadron Adjutant by email at adj.2117@aircadets.org to arrange a visit or call us on 01656 670125.

LINDSAY THOMAS

NEWS IN BRIEF

EASTER SHOW

PORTHCAWL Art Society's Easter exhibition takes place in the upstairs gallery of the old police station, John's Street, on Good Friday, April 3. On Easter Saturday, there will be a free coffee morning to officially open the exhibition.

FLORAL DISPLAY

PORTHCAWL Floral Arrangement Society, Wednesday, April 8, from 7.30pm at Awel-y-Mor Centre, Porthcawl – flower demonstration by Janet Davies, 'Bamboozled'. Doors open 6.30pm, raffle, sales table, members £3, non-members £6.

Men's group works with cancer charity

*Images by **Robert Visintainer.***

A LOCAL men's self-help group is working with a cancer charity – to support men diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Prostate Cancer UK and the Squirrel's Nest in Tondu are working together to offer a 'Men's Shed' programme to men affected by prostate cancer in the Bridgend area. The unit is filled with lathes, benches, saws, hammers and woodworking equipment. Skills in woodworking, from the very basic to the highly advanced, are used to produce anything from pens and bowls to clocks.

A spokesman said: "It is a chance to meet other men affected by prostate cancer, and meet new people and experience the camaraderie of working with other men.

"You can try something new and learn new skills, and get support from a Prostate Cancer UK specialist".

If you live in south Wales and have any questions or queries about this service, contact Robert at The Squirrel's Nest Men's Shed, Unit 38, Tondu Enterprise Centre, Bridgend, CF32 9BS; 01656 729625.

The Squirrel's Nest was established as a charity some years ago to provide a space where men could get together, work on practical projects and share stories. They found a new home two years ago in Tondu and joined in an international movement 'Men's Sheds' to give men an outlet for their creative talents, and help with social networking.

All PALS together!

Judith Lewis, patient experience manager, with Jenny Oliver, Jayne Curtis and Diana Yorath, patient advisory liaison officers.

New hospital PALS team helping 40 families each month

A NEW hands-on service at the Princess of Wales Hospital in Bridgend, aimed at supporting patients and their families, is proving so successful that plans are now being put in place to expand it across other hospitals.

The new Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) was initially set up in the summer, but has just been officially launched.

It provides practical, on-the-spot support for patients and families, and also address any issues as they arise; with the team working into the evening to be around during visiting times.

The PALS team visits all areas of the hospital, introducing themselves and providing information about the support that they can offer.

Since the start of the service, hospital complaints have almost halved from 82 in August 2014 to 47 in February 2015.

Catherine Roberts, head of the hospital's governance and patient experience team, said: "The new PALs service has offered a wide variety of different types of support.

"For example, they've helped patients with different dietary needs by liaising with the catering manager.

"They have been involved in referring patients to Bridgend Carers Association and Age Connect.

"They've arranged transport for patients, and sought support from the chaplain's service."

LOCAL TRADER LOSES ALCOHOL LICENCE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Speaking after the case, the Leader of Bridgend County Borough Council, Coun Mel Nott OBE, said: "Underage drinking has serious implications for the health and wellbeing of young people, and that is why our underage sales work, in partnership with South Wales Police, is such a priority for the authority.

"We appreciate that it can be very difficult to judge a person's age and it is essential that staff challenge purchasers to prove their age, if there is any doubt.

"We promote the use of the 'Challenge 25' message as a very simple but highly-effective method of preventing sales of alcohol to underage people.

"Any customer who appears to be aged 25 or under is asked to prove they are old enough to buy it, and following this policy correctly should ensure that a store never sells an age-restricted product to a youngster.

"It is disappointing that there were no such systems in place at this particular outlet to avoid illegal sales being made."

Inspector Darren Grady, from South Wales Police, added: "South Wales Police takes the sale of alcohol to underage people seriously, and we will continue to periodically check businesses with alcohol licences, to see that they are complying with their legal responsibility."

Anyone with concerns about underage people being able to purchase alcohol, should telephone Trading Standards on 01656 642643 or contact by email via ***trading.standards@bridgend.gov.uk*** *or call South Wales Police on 101.*

Has anyone lost a red rump tarantula?

TV'S Wildlife Patrol were called for advice when a Mexican red rump tarantula was discovered wandering around a grass pitch in Maesteg.

Council officials were alerted after the spider – which they say is "not generally harmful to humans" – was spotted by a passer-by at the Garth Park ball court on Tuesday, March 17.

Dave Edwards, the authority's Area Chargehand, scooped up the arachnid into a black bag before calling wildlife expert Dr Rhys Jones, from Cardiff University, for advice.

Dr Jones – best known as the star of the BBC One Wales series *Rhys Jones's Wildlife Patrol* – said: "It is unlikely that the spider would have travelled from distance, given the cold spring temperatures and the proximity of local houses.

"The surrounding habitat offered little interest or cover for that species of spider, given that it mainly consists of large open fields which are patrolled by many aerial predators, including gulls and crows.

"These birds would have easily spotted this tropical spider and – given half a chance – would have eaten her. All things considered, the spider had a very lucky escape before a bird or cat killed it."

The Mexican red rump, or *B. vagans* in Latin, was made famous in Jack Arnold's 1955 sci-fi movie *Tarantula*, where an ill-advised scientific experiment leads to a giant arachnid breaking out of captivity and terrorizing the Arizona desert.

Luckily, the red rump is not aggressive, and is currently being looked after by Dr Jones at Cardiff University, while a search goes on for the owner.

He added: "The red rump tarantula does not present a significant health risk to the general public. In the rare case of the spider biting, the symptoms would be similar to that of a mild bee sting.

"I'm happy to report that no one was unnecessarily frightened by the appearance of this spider on the loose.

"While the spider is now secure and recovering from its ordeal, anyone with information relating to this incident should either contact the local authority or the police on 101."

Coun Phil White, cabinet member for communities, added: "It's not every day that you spot an exotic pet such as this outside of its home environment, so we are appealing for the owner to get in touch as soon as possible.

"Although this tarantula does not pose a threat to humans, I am nevertheless grateful to the member of the public who reported it, and also to our Grounds Maintenance Team for their quick actions in securing it.

"I would also ask anyone who does come across exotic creatures such as these not to touch them, but to report it to the council or police as quickly as possible."

*The Guild **will** meet in April!*

Apologies to GEM readers, because I gave the wrong date for the Porthcawl Townswomen's Guild's next meeting in my last report.

*It is on **April 8** (NOT May 8) at 2pm in All Saints' Church Hall, when Mr Clive Williams will give a presentation on 'The Life and Music of JS Bach'. Do come and join us – all are welcome.*

Dorothy Thomas

Consultation on new school

PARENTS, teachers, pupils and governors are being invited to have their say on plans to expand and re-locate Brynmenyn Primary School.

Proposals have been put forward for a new two-form entry school on surplus land next to Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen, in a bid to cope with a rising demand for school places in the Valleys Gateway area.

A consultation period was launched on Monday, March 23 and will run until May 5. Copies of the consultation papers are available online at www.bridgend.gov.uk/consultation.

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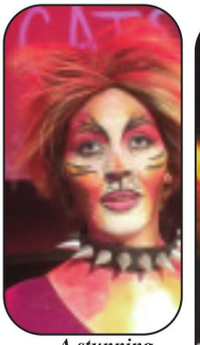
Pencoed Comprehensive School prizegiving takes on a new look!

Headteacher and guests at the prize-giving.



A stunning Leah Lent.

CATS Cerys Johnson, Tom Pound, Jade Evans.

THE year started brilliantly for Pencoed Comprehensive School when we received confirmation from the Welsh Government that we'd been categorised in Group 1 for standards and Grade A for ability to carry out improvements.

Consequently, we are a 'Highly Effective' school, colour coded as 'Green'. Pencoed Comprehensive is one of only nine 'Green' schools across the central south regions and one of 30 schools across Wales, out of 211 secondary schools.

Pencoed Comprehensive has also been recognised nationally as a school that has been closing the gap between poverty and attainment.

However, David George, headteacher, states that "statistics and percentages only tell a small part of the whole tale. The most important parts are the stories that individuals can tell about their journey through school".

Those stories were well and truly celebrated in the school's prize evening on March 19, highlighting pupils' wide range of talents in academic, sporting, technical and creative areas.

This year's prize evening took on a whole new look: the exam certificates had been handed out to pupils in a separate ceremony last December, so this evening focused entirely on prizes and awards won by pupils.

All those who attended enjoyed the musical items performed by the staff choir, Tom Pound, Hannah Martin and Jenna Dyckhoff. Pupils and staff also listened to purposeful addresses by the headteacher, Mr Andy Rea, chair of governors and our guest speaker Judge Paul Thomas QC.

Coun John Butcher, Mayor of Pencoed and Coun Richard Young, Deputy Mayor of Bridgend County Borough, also awarded prizes during the evening.

Judge Paul Thomas' address was highly inspirational, as well as humorous, keeping the whole audience entertained. Drawing on his own career path, he advised the young people present to follow the advice of their elders – be ambitious, and not to be afraid of failure. In short, to aim for the stars!

A major innovation was the introduction of video clips – not only of our pupils, but also Michael Sheen, the world-renowned actor no less, giving an inspiring introduction to the successful 'Page to Stage' project.

These clips allowed the audience to learn more about the achievements and future ambitions of the prizewinners.

Thank you very much to Mrs Sam Evans, deputy headteacher, for guiding us through the evening and to Mrs Jill Newman, supported by Mrs Sue Miles, for the organisation of the event. A copy of the prize evening brochure is available on our website, *www.pencoedcs.bridgend.sch.uk*. Along with the extensive list of prizewinners you'll find updates from all our departments.

'Moving on Up' Easter concert

WHAT a wonderful evening – full of variety, with primary school pupils joining us again this year. Items ranged from the serious to the comical, with the audience being kept totally enthralled throughout the evening.

The programme started with an orchestral item followed by the string group performing a section of the *Phantom of the Opera*.

These were followed by a whole range of items featuring some of the eisteddfod stage competitions. Items ranged from solo singing performances (Lauren Woodward, Tom Pound), duets (Olivia Bruford and Charlotte Jones) and group singing performances (Courtney Lee Owen, Lauren Woodward, Megan Lewis and Emma Powson) to individual and group recitations.

Millie Jenkins' recitation of 'The Land of the Bumbley Boo' was lovely, as well as the group recitation of 'The Angry Summer'. Jevan King, Cerys Johnson, and Jade Evans provided a dramatic presentation on 'Why should you visit Wales?'

Erin Scurrah and William Hughes delighted the audience with their flute duet of Edelweiss. Nathan King gave an energetic dance performance based on a medley of music from *Grease*, with his younger brother Jevan making a couple of brief comic entrances.

Later on we also had Cerys Johnson and Ellie Jones' exciting tap dancing routine from *Top Hat*. The solo items from the primary schools were truly exceptional and included solo musical items by Millie Andrews, Pencoed Primary; Ellie Hancock, Coety and Vivian Yip from Coychurch.

The icing on the primary cake was the Llanharan Samba Band – what a lively performance that was!

Year-11 pupils then showed their diverse musical talents which formed part of their GCSE music examination. Bryony Taylor performed on the tuba, while Megan Griffiths played the keyboard in a duet with Mrs Jenkins.

Charlotte Jones sang the classical piece 'Lift Thine Eyes' and then Jevan King and Jack Cotterell did a duet on the three timpani they had lined up on stage.

These performances were followed by Millie Jenkins and choir performing extracts from *Matilda* and then the school choir sang a whole medley of *James Bond* themes to take the audience into the interval.

The second part of the evening showcased featured sections from the musical *Alice*, performed by members of our lower school drama club. These young performers (Jade Evans, Ben Salked, Lara Richards and Millie Jenkins) gave a flawless performance, singing, dancing and moving so professionally.

We than had a version of *Mamma Mia*. If you've seen the film you'd marvel at how the whole story could be depicted so concisely within a short space of time – but that could well be down to the expert performances of our older pupils.

Again, the mood swung from the sad to the happy, serious to the comic – a whole range of emotions played out before us (Olivia Bruford, Tom Pound, Gemma Moloney, Leah Lent, Zoe Morgan, Josh East and Ellis Brown).

Then, as a finale, an energetic performance of 'Waterloo' by all the pupils in their ABBA finery.

This was just the excuse that the audience were waiting for as they very quickly joined in the singing, dancing and the clapping! A huge thank you to all those who took part in the concert, the teaching staff from primary schools and the technical team. Particular thanks go to Mrs Rhian Jenkins, head of music, for organising the event, as well as Mrs Kay Smith, Mrs Alex Hewitt, Miss Charlotte Boughton (student teacher) and the peripatetic music teachers for the time spent working with the pupils in readiness for the concert.

What was apparent this year again was that the high standard of performing talent at Pencoed Comprehensive is here to stay for many years to come.

Eisteddfod!

THE lower and upper school eisteddfodau were held on two consecutive days early in March, with over 200 pupils from local primary schools also joining us.

What an energetic, noisy and enjoyable two days, led wonderfully by Mr David Owen.

As ever, each head of house led their house with great enthusiasm, with Branwen being the overall winners with Gwenllian only 14 points behind! Adding to the excitement this year was the debut performance of the Staff Choir.

As well as the wide ranging stage competitions, there were a host of other competitions linked to all the teaching departments.

These ranged from artwork, written work, posters, designing magazine and cd covers, designing t-shirts and even buildings. The eisteddfod Chair competition was won this year by Caitlin Jenkins, for her English coursework, a piece of Dystopian writing entitled 'To Fetch a Pail of Water' about a nightmare future world.

Many congratulations to Caitlin. Special congratulations also go to Emma Powson who entered an incredible 24 competitions! To give you an idea of all the entries, please see the competitions (cystadlaethau) booklet on our website (*www.pencoedcs.bridgend.sch.uk*.) along with the lists of all the winners.

Thank you very much to the Welsh department for the planning and smooth running of this exhilarating two day event, to all departments for devising and judging the off-stage competitions, and of course *diolch yn fawr iawn* to everyone who took part.

History is cool!

ON Wednesday, October 11, year-8 history students welcomed pupils from Bryntirion to participate in 'A Share with Schools' event organised by Cardiff University.

Pupils took part in two workshops and found the day to be very engaging and exciting. One workshop was run by Miss Brennan and Mrs Clark of the Pencoed history department and focused on development of historical enquiry skills.

The university-led session allowed pupils to investigate a variety of artefacts and then organise a museum exhibition.

Pupils found that their historical and literacy skills were developed and enjoyed the challenge of both workshops.

Volunteers from KS4 and KS5 history classes supported pupils and worked superbly with the undergraduate students visiting from Cardiff.

The day was so successful that Pencoed and Bryntirion history departments are liaising to organise another event as soon as possible!

Cardiff University were very complimentary about the behaviour of all pupils involved and are keen to continue working with our learners. Pencoed history department would like to thank Mrs Rhian Jenkins (MAT co-ordinator) for organising the day, the staff and pupils from Bryntirion Comprehensive and the pupils from Pencoed who participated and volunteered.

In the words of one of our year-8 pupils – "this day made history come alive #historyiscool!"

stAR readers

OUR pupils' enthusiasm for the stAR reading scheme never seems to fade away! Pupils have again been really busy quizzing this term, with a total to date of 3,509 books read by pupils.

We have had three more Word Millionaires; Milla Thomas, Dewi Svenson, who are both in year-7, and Joshua Midlane from year-9. This is the second award for Dewi. He had read over one million words before Christmas and is now well over two million words. What an achievement! Congratulations to these pupils.

Congratulations also to Macey James, William Davies, Jevan King, Isabelle Bray and Morgan Mayle, who have all achieved 'stAR Readers of the Month' by completing the most quizzes in their year groups. Pupils earn points for their houses each time they pass a quiz.

Thanks to the efforts of pupils, Llywelyn has been in top position for the last two months, narrowly beating Gwenllian by four points (two quizzes), followed by Owain and then Branwen.

Writing skills

PENCOED Comprehensive School has been selected by NSP Wales (National Support Programme) to pilot the implementation of 'Rubrics'. 'Rubrics' are designed to be used as a planning and reflection frame, which support pupils in the improvement of their overall standard of writing.

Some of our year-9 pupils were filmed recently during a lesson using the 'Rubric' frame within a 'Recount' writing lesson, taught by Miss Drakeford.

NSP Wales will use the DVD as a training tool, exemplifying best practice, for teachers across Wales.

Plan ahead

EVERY year, our year-11 pupils have an opportunity to meet with local employers for mock interviews, a very useful practical experience for all those planning to go out into the workplace or on to further education.

All the employers were very impressed by the high standard of all our pupils, with special congratulations to Grace Saughnessy who was described as being "one of the most impressive, engaging students I have ever met in over 10 years of working with Careers Wales in mock interview events."

Safe eclipse

STAFF and pupils alike waited enthusiastically for a safe sighting of the partial solar eclipse. Science students benefited from the welder's helmet specially adapted by Mr Steven Rees, while sixth form geography students under the watchful eye of Mr Stuart Pownall used a colander and sheets of white paper. All these methods proved effective for a rare sight not to be seen again for many years to come.

Pupil voice

THE Pencoed School Council has been working very hard to respond to the suggestions and queries from their peers.

The council have met on numerous occasions and have discussed a range of issues from canteen provision to the community of Pencoed.

Most recently, members of the council met with Mrs Hopkins to liaise with her about the canteen menu and suggest improvements.

They also met with Mrs Jones to discuss issues in school facilities. As a result, from next term, pupils will start to notice changes occurring based on these developments.

The members of the school council are all committed to working with their peers, staff, governors and the community in ensuring that our school goes from strength to strength.

The elected members, representing all the year groups, are: Max Shaughnessy, Ben Salkeld, Jasmine Gardner, Rhiannon Svenson, Hannah Griffths, Ethan Davies, Mack Gibbons, Josh East, Grace Shaughnessy, Nathan King, Rhoslyn Bryn, Matthew Llewellyn, Connor Rees and Megan Owen.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Pencoed Comprehensive School news

Sporting high-flyers.

stAR readers.

Emma Powson, eisteddfod record - holder!

Eclipse helmet.

William Hughes and Erin Scurrah practicing their flute duet.

(Continued from page 6)

Cats

THE drama department have been busy this term and everyone is particularly excited about this summer's school production. The school has had special permission to perform *CATS* as it is currently on tour and a West End production.

Based on the poems by TS Eliot, the musical tells the story of a tribe of cats called the Jellicles and the night they make what is known as 'the Jellicle choice' and decide which cat will ascend to the Heaviside Layer and come back to a new life.

In order to raise funds for the school show, everyone involved dressed up in costume and completed a 'rehearsalthon' which has already raised nearly £500!

The show runs from July 9-11 and tickets will be on sale after Easter! Be quick though as it is sure to be a sellout!

Don't forget to grab a ticket for a magical, mystery trip with the cast of *Alice* to Wonderland. Our lower school drama club are performing their own full scale production on June 17,18 and 19. Tickets are selling fast at £5 each.

It takes place in our intimate studio space, with only 50 places a night, which are available from the drama studio now!

Logo

MANY of the exam classes have had their final drama practical exams and Mrs Smith is extremely proud and delighted with the standard of work this year. Year-13 held a showcase evening of exam work for parents and friends.

It was an emotional evening and parents were moved and stunned by the powerful, emotive performance. There were a number of emails and messages the next day describing how astonished the audience were at the work and how appreciative they were for being able to see the performances. Mrs Smith is so proud of exam classes.

After the event she said: "I am the proudest I could be. My sixth form drama evening moved everyone to tears and it was such a powerful performance. I'm not sure if I will experience a night like it again. I am very lucky to teach the kids I do – Pencoed kids are the best!"

Friends

PUPILS, staff and governors are extremely grateful to the members of 'Friends' for their financial support to the school and the wonderful hospitality provided at school events and parents' evenings.

Over recent months they have contributed nearly £2,000 to whole school projects such as frames for displaying pupils' artwork, a mobile PA system, screen for events in the sportshall, tents and equipment for Duke of Edinburgh expeditions and a monitor for one of the resource areas.

Their next fundraising event is the Nataly Churchill psychic evening at the Buffs Club on April 28.

Sports roundup

IF you have a look at the sporting achievements in the prize evening brochure on the school website you'll see that the list is quite amazing.

Congratulations to all those who represent the school and local clubs and a special mention to those pupils at regional as well as national level in a whole variety of sports, namely Isabelle Bushrod, GB Junior European Championship Team Canoe Slalom; Tiegan Embling-Jones, Wales U14 Basketball; Kayleigh Gregory, British IKO Karate winner; Rosie Pope, Wales U15 Netball Development Hub; Tommy Reffell and Tom Williams, Wales under-16 Rugby Training Squad, and India Howells who has qualified as a Tae Kwon Do International Instructor.

Cup competition

IN rugby union, year-9 pupils qualified from the Ospreys region to reach a Welsh Cup preliminary round game against St Cenydd, Caerphilly.

The boys were fortunate enough to play at the Dragons training facility in Ystrad Mynach and came out convincing winners. Unfortunately, they couldn't repeat the feat in the last 32 of the competition, losing to a strong Newbridge side.

The year-11 team made it one round further into the competition. After winning the Ospreys League without losing a game, they faced an extremely tough game against a much-fancied Glantaf team.

A superb performance saw them win 15-14 with Matthew Willmott kicking a penalty with two minutes left to play.

The team then travelled to Caerleon to play in the last 16, but didn't manage to get their game going and eventually lost 25-21. Both year 9 and 11 rugby league teams made it through to the Welsh Cup semi-finals where they play Strade, Llanelli and Cwm Rhymni respectively.

In football, the senior squad were the most successful side in Welsh Cup action. After beating Y Dderwen, Olchfa and St Josephs Port Talbot to qualify out of west Glamorgan, they faced Fairwater in the last 16.

The game was tighter than the scoreline suggested and unfortunately the boys lost 4-1. The PE department now look forward to the summer term and its associated sporting activities, culminating of course with our annual sport day at the end of the summer term.

With the summer term, of course, the exam season also comes along. We wish everyone the best of luck! **LH**

Three year old's dream of freedom...

Local pub supports family campaign for Jack's special trike!

by GEM REPORTER

ABOVE: Jack trying out the specially adapted trike.

A severely disabled little boy from Llantwit Major dreams of riding his own trike – and a local pub is supporting his parents' campaign to make that dream come true.

Jack Vincent, aged three, suffered a series of mini strokes caused by a form of meningitis he contracted at just four weeks old.

His mother Debra told The GEM: "Due to the severity of the strokes, Jack has a form of 'dystonic cerebral palsy' resulting in multiple disabilities including severe mobility problems.

"Despite numerous disabilities, he is a very happy little boy and always smiling!

"He needs lots of physiotherapy in order to help improve his muscle tone and co-ordination."

Jack has physiotherapy sessions privately and with the NHS.

Jack, Debra and dad Mark recently attended Pedal Power in Cardiff at which Jack was able to try out a specially adapted trike.

Debra said: "Jack and we were thrilled to find a piece of equipment that not only met his requirements, but also gave him a sense of freedom. Unfortunately, as the trike has to be specially made and adapted to support Jack's complex needs, it is a very expensive."

The couple feel that the trike would benefit him immensely.

"It a very supportive piece of equipment. He is safe and secure with the proper head, hip, leg and foot supports.

"It encourages Jack to move his legs to pedal, which provides excellent therapy for his legs and hips, strengthening the muscles and improving co-ordination as he is currently non mobile."

When the staff and friends of the Old White Hart heard about Jack's dream of racing around on his own trike, they wanted to help. The pub is now holding a weekly raffle at its Thursday quiz nights to raise money for his trike.

Elinid Carlig of the Old White Hart said: "If anyone would like to donate, raffle tickets are available behind the bar throughout the week, and we draw each raffle after the quiz on Thursdays.

"Please contact us on 01446 796809 or at the email address *oldwhitehartinn@gmail.com* if you would like to donate a prize for the raffle."

LEFT: Break open the bubbly – Barry Island Pleasure Park is about to return. Celebrating (from left to right) were Aidan Lynch, Kimberley Danter, Alun Cairns and Henry Danter.

Island Pleasure Park returns in deal that could be worth £20m!

MAJOR preparatory work was taking place on the Barry Island funfair site after a deal was signed sealing a return of the world famous Pleasure Park, writes TIM CHAPMAN.

Fairground businessman Henry Danter can now go ahead with a redevelopment which could, over the years, amount to a £20million investment.

Recent months had seen a rollercoaster ride as three parties – the Danter family, the Vale Council and Barry Island Development Company – hammered out an agreement that secures the future of the site.

On Monday this week Kimberley Danter told The GEM: "We are absolutely thrilled. We eventually got the keys at 2pm today and the machinery started coming on to the site.

"We plan to be open this weekend and will do what we can this summer.

"We will be spending about £20million in the next few years. It will take time, but we have a good team and will get there."

Within minutes of the deal being struck, fairground rides from the Czech Republic were being moved on to the site.

Major work on the construction of arcades and new rides on the four acre location will take place in the winter.

Alun Cairns, the Conservative parliamentary candidate, said: "I am so pleased that such a long drawn out deal has finally been reached. To see so many wonderful and brand new rides arriving is so encouraging.

"From the start I have done all I can to encourage investment in Barry Island, and I see this as just the start of a resurgence in the area."

The Dolphin will become flats and commercial units – the Pleasure Park will be restored with 21st century entertainment and rides.

CATALYST

Paul Haley of Pride in Barry, which campaigns on behalf of the town, said the deal should place the Island at the centre of the area's tourism industry.

"I am delighted to welcome Henry Danter and his family to Barry Island.

"They have waited patiently to get the keys to the Pleasure Park and will already be working extremely hard to ensure that the show will go on in time for Easter.

"I know that Henry can count on the support, goodwill, and encouragement of all of us Barrians who hold Barry Island dear to our hearts.

"I look forward to the regeneration and redevelopment that will take place over the next few years.

"I believe that this will be the catalyst that will ultimately see further tourism development of Nell's Point and place Barry Island firmly as the 'regional tourism heart' of south Wales."

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ABOVE: Huw Irranca-Davies joins the cast of Two Punks and a Tandem and local schoolchildren for a photo, following the production at Blaengarw Workmen's Hall.

Two Punks and a Tandem at Blaengarw Workmen's Hall!

Huw Irranca-Davies has praised Vale and Valley Community Arts and local schoolchildren for bringing a theatre production of *Two Punks and a Tandem* to Blaengarw Workmen's Hall.

The play was produced with the help of The Arts Council of Wales Young Promoters Scheme. Local children from the Garw valley took part in the scheme to experience the process of becoming the promoters for an event in their own community.

Two Punks and a Tandem is a two-man production by the Silly Boys Theatre Company. It is the story of two friends from the seaside town of Penzance, who decide to embark upon an epic cycle ride from John O'Groats to Land's End. This is a story crammed full of comedy, drama, music, anger, fear, friendship and love.

Speaking after the show, the MP said: "What a great night of entertainment, with exciting new drama and writing being brought to an iconic valleys venue.'

"I look forward to the next touring production, and congratulate Valley and Vale Arts and the local schoolchildren who did a superb job promoting the show. I'd urge anyone interested in exciting new live theatre to check out forthcoming events at the Blaengarw Workmen's Hall."

Street art brightens up town centre in Bridgend

LOCAL artists and professional painters have put the finishing touches to artworks – as part of Bridgend town centre's ongoing regeneration.

The LookUp! street art team painted the alleyway next to the Bad Habits skate shop on Market Street, and on the flank walls of The Star pub next door.

Arts co-ordinator Dan Green, who has been working for Bridgend County Borough Council on the project, said: "We did a lot of planning work around what was needed to liven up walls in Bridgend, and I think there has been a shift in attitude towards street art since we started work.

"It's a bridge between the past and the future – for example, Nick Morgan's work on The Star is inspired by the past of the place while many of the other pieces look to the future as well."

Although street art is well-established in Cardiff and Bristol, this is the first such project to take place in Bridgend.

Dan added: "We could have waded in with a load of people that we already know from Cardiff or Bristol, but we wanted to get local people on board. The response has been really good. Everyone that I've been working with here has been absolutely lovely and willing to help each other.

"The aim here is to get it absolutely spot on. We will make it look really professional, and we are hoping that if we can get two, three, four or five other businesses interested then it will really catch on.

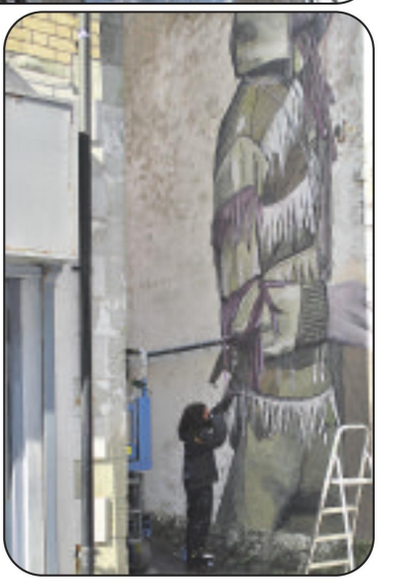
"We want to extend it and incorporate all of the different aspects of Bridgend. Hopefully there will be more scope for the community and schools in particular to get involved."

The project is funded by Bridgend County Borough Council through the Townscape Heritage Initiative and the Special Regeneration Fund, and to celebrate its completion a special event will be held from midday on Saturday, April 4 where members of the public will be invited to view the gallery.

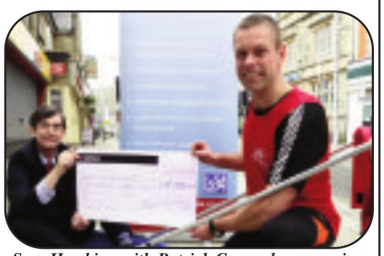
Among the pieces included in the alleyway is a mural painted by children from Llangewydd Junior School, which depicts Bridgend.

Local artist Jenny Topaz added: "It's exciting because you don't see this sort of thing going on in a small town. Hopefully it will inspire people to do more by coming out and seeing the gallery."

Justin Jenkins, owner of the Bad Habits skate shop, added: "The thing that really strikes me is how people have been walking past and just stopping and staring at what's going on. They really appreciate it; it's putting a smile on people's faces."



Solicitor Sam's Arctic marathon



Sam Hawking with Patrick Carmody, managing director of Perfect Software.

A BRIDGEND company, Perfect Software Ltd, is supporting solicitor Sam Hawking, who is taking on a 353-mile race across the Arctic Circle, described as "the toughest, coldest and windiest extreme ultra marathon on the planet".

Sam is also likely to brave temperatures of between -30 and -50 degrees celsius, as well as extremely strong winds that have forced previous competitors to crawl their way across the Arctic Circle.

Sam will start his journey in the Canadian Arctic betwen the Yukon and the Northwest Territories on March 20 with 352.64 miles standing between him and the finish line.

Managing director Patrick Carmody said: "We wish Sam luck on his upcoming expedition, and encourage everyone across south Wales to support his cause by adding to the £6,430 raised so far," concluded Patrick.

PACT meetings

OLDCASTLE PACT at The Library, Brynteg Comprehensive School on March 27 at 6.30pm.

BRACKLA PACT, Bridgend Deaf Club, Coychurch Road, Bridgend on March 31 at 7pm.

PORTHCAWL EAST CENTRAL PACT at Porthcawl Fire Station, Porthcawl, April 7 at 7pm.

BRYNTIRION, LALESTON and MERTHYR MAWR PACT at Laleston Gardening Club, Laleston on April 9 at 7pm.

LITCHARD, PENDRE and COITY PACT at Gilead Chapel, Coity, on April 30 at 7pm.

REST BAY and NOTTAGE PACT at Nottage Scout Hall, Nottage on May 5 at 8pm.

Who wants to build what, and where?

*Llangynwyd Middle Community – **Parc Tir Irall, land adjacent Llangynwyd Pavillion, Llangynwyd** – Temporary storage container for garden equipment.*

*Wales & West Housing Assoc – **3 & 6 Restway Gardens, Bridgend** – Fell bay tree to rear No 6 and fell horse chestnut to side of No 3.*

*Mrs Andrea Wojcikowski – **3 Ffynnon Groyw, Broadlands, Bridgend** – Fell ash tree (1954) Glam CC No 3.*

*Mr Lee Byrne – **Westwood House, Broadlands** – Fell horse chestnut and oak trees and crown reduce horse chestnut and beech trees (1954 Glam CC No 3.*

*Joanna Washbourne-Davies – **55 Priory Avenue, Bridgend** – Proposed granny annexe to side of dwelling.*

*Mrs Joy Parish – **53 Danygraig Avenue, Porthcawl** – Reconstruct and reroof existing front bay, internal structural alteration and detached garage extension.*

*Mr Gareth Humphreys – **7 Greenmeadow, Cefn Cribwr, Bridgend** – Single storey rear extension.*

*Mr Nick Layland – **3 Ashleigh Court, New Road, Porthcawl** – Proposed single storey lean-to extension to rear of property and new detached single garage to front.*

*Kinetica Energy Ltd – **Land at Stormy Farm, Pyle** – Request for screening opinion for the erection of a single wind turbine.*

*Bellway Homes Wales Ltd – **Land at Pwll y Waun, Porthcawl** – Erection of eight dwellings.*

*Ms Louise Pugh – **67 John Street, Porthcawl** – Change of use from shop to mixed A1/A3 coffee shop with new shop front and outdoor seating.*

*Enigma Shopfitting – **Unit 37C and 37D designer outlet village, Cefn Hirgoed, Bridgend** – Remove current shopfront and install square corner shopfront to increase floor area.*

*Mr and Mrs C Flower – **44 Tremains Court, Bracka, Bridgend** – Two storey extension to side and porch to front.*

*Hughes & Owen – **Plot 1, Abergarw Farm, Brynmenyn** – Amendment to house type B planning consent P/09/774/FUL.*

*Mr Hywel Davies – **21 Nottage Mead, Porthcawl** – Part-demolish existing single storey addition and construct two storey side extension and internal alterations.*

Over 50s can phone a friend!

A NEW telephone befriending service supporting people over 50 affected by mental health illness and/or learning disabilities is being launched in Bridgend county borough.

MHMwales current 'Moving On' Over 50s Befriending Project supports people 50 plus living in the borough with mental health illness, emotional issues and/or learning disabilities.

Telephone Connections, a free telephone befriending service, will provide support (via a telephone link) to people in their own homes. The project aims to make regular phone calls to individuals who sign up for the service by volunteers.

"This lifeline can reduce the feeling of loneliness and isolation; improving wellbeing and quality of life," said MHMWales befriending coordinator, Sara Langford.

"We are very excited to be able to offer this additional service to people aged 50 plus in Bridgend suffering with a mental health related disorder and people with learning disabilities.

"This is a much needed service which will not only help reduce isolation but help individuals to feel part the community once again."

Contact Sara Langford on 01656 767045/651450, or email: Sara.langford@mhmwales.org.

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The Food and Drink Festival's new sponsors for spruced-up event!

THE Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival has announced new sponsors, including local accountancy firm Macey Owen Limited and the Cardiff Marriott Hotel.

Both companies have signed a deal to support this year's Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival, which is this year taking place in the spring. Loyal sponsor HSBC will also continue to support the flourishing festival for another year.

From Sunday, May 24 to Monday, May 25, tens of thousands of visitors will flock to Cowbridge to peruse 100 exhibitors from Wales and further afield, selling everything from fishcakes to cupcakes and fruit gins to fruit bouquets.

Speaking about the new partnerships, Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival chairman, John Davies said: "This year marks a new chapter in the festival's history and we are delighted that Macey Owen, the Cardiff Marriott Hotel and HSBC have chosen to support us at this exciting time.

"The festival is a highlight for the area and their sponsorship shows their commitment to the town and community and the ongoing success of the festival."

Charlotte Hulley from Macey Owen said: "The festival is a key part of Cowbridge and has been for the past 11 years.

"It's a time when the whole town comes together to welcome visitors from near and far and join them in sampling the UK's finest cuisine and marvelling at local craftsmanship.

"We're thrilled to be involved and look forward to the much anticipated weekend."

Gary Giddings from HSBC said: "It is a privilege to be involved in what is a highlight of the South Wales calendar. The HSBC team work really hard over the weekend but enjoy browsing the stalls after their shift."

Philip Greer from the Cardiff Marriott Hotel said: "The festival line-up looks fantastic this year; they've really pulled out all the stops! We're really looking forward to being there and seeing where this relationship might go in the future."

This year, the festival will include a second site to peruse with delicious freshly cooked food and a backdrop of live music by local performers.

The festival includes the ever-popular Champagne marquee which is this year being supplied by The Bear Hotel, with some top brands available and the usual sparkling atmosphere.

Demonstrations by some of Wales' best-known chefs including acclaimed chef James Sommerin and festival favourite Anand George will take place throughout the Bank Holiday weekend's festivities. These remain free for ticket holders.

Young foodies are well catered for with plenty of planned arts, crafts, workshops and exhibitions plus a treasure hunt throughout the town.

Sponsorship deals at all levels are still available for this year's festival.

To find out how you can support the show, contact Festival Manager Polly Wilson on 07875 290428, email info@cowbridgefoodanddrink.org.

Full details and the complete line-up can be found on the website www.cowbridgefoodanddrink.org.

Tickets for the festival – which cost £5 per day or £8 for the weekend – can be purchased online for the first time with a 10 per cent discount on all pre-sale tickets.

Children 12 years and under admitted free.

Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival takes place on May 24-25.

'Recycle your Easter egg foil wrappers'

LOCAL youngsters preparing to enjoy their Easter eggs are being urged to "please recycle your foil" by the Vale Council.

Easter recycling bunnies Jessica and Daniel, both 10 years old, from Gwenfo Church in Wales Primary School have been helping to spread the message to ensure that all Easter waste is recycled properly.

Since December 2011 clean foil can go in with residents' co-mingled kerbside recycling, but the fact that it's one of the newer materials to be added to the service can mean that it's overlooked.

Clifford Parish, operational manager for waste management and cleansing, said: "Children enjoy getting Easter eggs; I know my grandson Reuben does. We tend to buy the eggs that are either their favourites, or are on special offer in the shops.

"But many eggs now come with less unnecessary packaging such as plastic trays, and if you can, please buy eggs with no, or as little, packaging as possible.

"Once the chocolate has been enjoyed, please recycle all foil, plus any cardboard boxes or plastic."

WRU CHIEF TO TAKE ON AIRPORT CHALLENGE

THE group chief executive of the Welsh Rugby Union, Roger Lewis, is the new chairman of Cardiff Airport.

He is leaving his post in October after the Rugby World Cup and will replace Lord Rowe-Beddoe.

Mr Lewis has been credited with transforming the finances of the WRU and there are high hopes that he can now bring his business acumen to bear in what he has described as "an exciting new challenge" at Rhoose.

Transport Minister Edwina Hart AM was quoted as saying that he was "the right person to steer our future ambitions" at the airport, which the Welsh Government bought in 2013.

Welsh Conservative Leader in the Senedd, Andrew RT Davies AM, commented: "Roger Lewis brings with him a wealth of experience, which will certainly be needed with the challenges that await him.

"The Welsh Government has now spent upwards of £80 million on the airport and it's about time we saw that money delivering net gain for the taxpayer.

"The key to his success in the role will be to attract viable and attractive routes and, I would hope, to deliver the airport back into private ownership in the long run".

'On-line slimming pill made me ill'

A young woman has contacted The GEM to warn people of the dangers of buying slimming pills on-line.

Emily Thomas (18) who lives in Cardiff, but is originally from Barry, said that when her order for slimming pills arrived it made her ill.

"I saw an advert publicising them on Facebook and saying they were used by celebrities.

"A parcel came after two days. There was no receipt and I'd had no email confirmation which was a bit weird."

When Emily took one of the pills, she experienced an adverse reaction.

"It made me ill. I was at my nan's house and had to stay in bed for the day.

"Later, I discovered a further amount had gone out of my account, and that there had been two other attempts to take money."

When she went down to the bank, she was told that another woman had been upset to find around £90 debited by the same company.

She believes there is nothing she can do to get her money back, and was told the terms and conditions were stated on the company's website. Emily has had to put the episode down to experience.

"I want to warn other women. If something seems too good to be true, it probably is."

The best advice for those wanting to lose weight is to seek deal with their GP or pharmacist.

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BUS SERVICE EXTENDED TO HOSPITAL

THE 303/304 bus service operated by New Adventure Travel will be extended to include University Hospital Llandough and the Cardiff Bay sports village from Monday, April 20.

Following talks between the Vale Council, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, and New Adventure Travel Ltd, an agreement was reached to improve bus links to and from the hospital, the council has announced.

The service will initially serve temporary locations next to the multi-storey car park and the children's unit, and at the existing bus stop at the eastern end of the hospital, before suitable bus stop facilities are installed at various locations around the hospital's internal ring road.

Following the planned expansion of the hospital later this year, New Adventure Travel has agreed to run its commercial Monday to Saturday daytime journeys via University Hospital Llandough.

This is in addition to the bus service that the council already financially supports which serves the hospital on Monday to Saturday evenings and all day on Sundays and bank holiday Mondays.

The route is also changing to serve the Cardiff Bay Sports Village on all Monday to Saturday journeys, and will also introduce an additional morning journey from Llantwit Major to Cardiff, Monday to Saturday.

Vale councillor Lis Burnett, cabinet member for regeneration, said: "Both the actions of the hospital and service provider that have enabled these service changes are very much welcomed.

"I am sure that the improved links will make life a lot easier for many to get to and from Llandough Hospital, as well as the popular Cardiff Bay Sports Village and would encourage people to use this excellent facility."

Peter Welsh, Board Secretary for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board stated: "After many years of not being able to do this, we are delighted to see the bus services re-entering fully the hospital grounds.

"This improvement is part of a series of changes at the hospital designed to improve the range of services and facilities for our patients, visitors and staff."

Vale staff's £1,000 cheque for charity honours paramedic

THE Vale Council's building control team has raised £1,000 for the Marie Curie Centre, Penarth, in memory of their friend and local paramedic, Adrian Cook, who sadly passed away in February.

The team, along with staff from the Council's Planning Department and Nina Estate Agents, sold raffle tickets and collected donations at the annual Building Excellence Awards at the Vale Golf Club on 30 January. Around £900 was raised on the night between the 90 guests, with the remaining £100 donated by Nina herself.

Last week, the team visited the charity's hospice in Penarth to present the cheque for £1,000.

Leader of the Council, Coun Neil Moore, said: "I am very proud of the staff, and pleased they have given their time and effort to a very worthy cause."

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Amy will go on six-day trek in mum's memory

A Cardiff and Vale University Health Board radiographer is taking on a six-day trek – to raise money for a hospice that provided "amazing care" to her mum.

Amy Voisey, who has worked at University Hospital Llandough for 10 years, sadly lost her mum to peritoneal cancer in March 2006. Amy has signed up to take part in a six-day trek in Costa Rica during April 2016 to raise funds for Marie Curie, the Cardiff and Vale hospice in Penarth.

Amy said: "It is such an amazing charity and all the staff are fantastic. They not only look after and support the patient but also the family and friends.

"They were able to keep my mum as comfortable as possible and let her make her own decisions on how and where she wanted to live out her final days.

"I just want to give back as much as possible to Marie Curie, so that other people are able to get the same level of care and support. I would love to raise as much money as possible for the charity to say thank you.

Amy on her five-day cycle ride from Vietnam to Cambodia.

"I have previously taken part in a five-day cycle challenge from Vietnam to Cambodia where I covered over 200 miles to raise money. I fully embrace these challenges as the charity is very close to my heart.

"The trek will be very tough, even harder than the cycle challenge. All money raised will go directly to the charity, I'm hoping to raise £3,300."

Karen Jones, community fundraiser for Marie Curie based at the charity's Cardiff and Vale Hospice, said: "Last year, our doctors, nurses and carers provided specialist care to around 600 in-patients, 870 out-patients and 2,000 day care attendees at a cost of £3.9 million.

"This would not have been possible without the support of trekkers like Amy, who go the extra mile to help fund our work supporting people living with a terminal illness, and their families, here at the hospice."

To sponsor Amy, visit her Just Giving page www.justgiving.com/Amy-Voisey2014.

If you're interested in taking part in the Costa Rica Trek for the hospice, contact Karen Jones on 02920 426028, or email Karen.jones@mariecurie.org.uk.

LOCAL COLLEGE STUDENTS TASTE WORLDSKILLS SUCCESS

STUDENTS from Cardiff and Vale College have been celebrating success in the Welsh heats of the WorldSkills Competition hosted by the college.

Skills Competition Wales feeds into the WorldSkills UK rounds, with winners going on to compete in the Skills UK finals later this year. The college hosted the Welsh finals for the Advanced Microsoft IT Technician and Advanced Beauty Therapy rounds.

CAVC saw Level 3 beauty therapy students take all three prizes in advanced beauty therapy. Alex McWhirter won the gold medal, while Aukse Antanaityte won silver and Chloe Isgrove bronze. It is the first time any of them have entered the competition.

Alex said: "I was very surprised but very happy to win the gold. The competition was very nerve-wracking but, once we got into it, it was all right."

Aukse added: "I didn't expect to win anything so it was a nice surprise for me. I enjoyed the competition – I've never done anything like it before but I found it very useful for my course and it was a good experience."

Chloe said: "It was a real shock as I didn't expect to do so well. It was the first time for all of us so we didn't know what to expect and all the students from other colleges looked really good!"

The students will now qualify for the next round of WorldSkills UK. "I'm really looking forward to it now that I know what sort of thing we will be asked to do," Alex said.

Meanwhile, Level 3 IT student James Holloway won bronze in the Advanced Microsoft IT Technician competition, which was also hosted by CAVC.

"It was such a shock – I really wasn't expecting to win bronze," James said. "I never win anything! I will be going to the UK Skills Show now and I'm looking forward to it.

"I thought the competition was really good fun and I enjoyed every second of it. I'm really glad I signed up to it now."

EASTER EGG HUNT

THE Llantwit Major Surf Lifesaving club is holding its annual Easter egg hunt at Llantwit Major beach at 12 noon on Easter Monday, April 6; £1 entry; refreshments from 11am.

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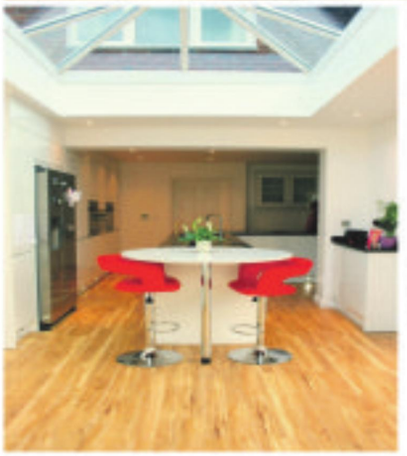

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Cheeky Seren.

The GEM has joined forces with the Dogs Trust to find suitable homes for inmates at the Bridgend rehoming centre.

SEREN is a lively and cheeky four-year-old crossbreed. She is very inquisitive and has a mischievous nature.

Seren needs a home where owners who are confident and have experience of strong-minded dogs and can give her the training she needs in a positive manner.

Unfortunately, Seren doesn't socialise with other dogs, so she will need to be the only dog in the home. She will also need an adult-only home.

She will require active owners who have time to help her settle in. Multiple visits to the centre are required to get to know her and work alongside our trainers.

Seren will make a fab companion and will keep you busy! **LINDA FEAGAN**

Supporter Relations Officer, Dogs Trust Bridgend

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BIKE CLUB IS BACK!

THE Vale Council-led Barry Communities First is bringing back its popular Bike Club each Tuesday from April 14, at 4.30pm – 6pm in Iolo Park, Treharne Road.

It is run by trained volunteers to help children and young people learn how to ride a bike safely on roads.

Bikes and helmets are provided to those who need them, and there are also free refreshments. Children aged 8 or under must be accompanied by an adult.

The club is open to Barry Communities First residents, including parts of Buttrills, Castleland, Cadoc, Court and Gibbonsdown. For more information contact 01446 709432 or visit www.BarryCommunities First.org.

Local professor attends a special anniversary event honouring Churchill Trust

PROF Allan Williams, of the University of Wales Trinity St David at Swansea University, attended a reception at Buckingham Palace, hosted by the Queen on March 18.

Professor Allan Williams meets The Queen.

The Queen, who is patron of The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, hosted the event to mark its 50th anniversary as Sir Winston's living legacy.

Prof Williams and Dr Kathy Seddon FRSA, chair of the Welsh Association of Churchill Fellows,were among the group of Welsh Fellows introduced to the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at the reception.

Since 1965, over 5,000 British citizens have been awarded Churchill Fellowships, from over 100,000 applicants, to travel overseas to study areas of topical and personal interest.

The knowledge and innovative ideas they bring back are shared, for the benefit of their profession, their community, and, in many cases, the nation.

Prof Williams is a key member of the Coastal and Marine Group, which monitors proposed developments along the coast, including the Swansea Tidal Lagoon plan.

He went on his Fellowship in 1992 to Australia and New Zealand for two months to investigate marine and coastal conservation issues.

Over the course of his academic career, Prof Williams has written more than 300 papers on this wide-ranging issue.

Last year, he and Prof Enzo Pranzini of Florence University co-wrote what is on its way to being the definitive academic book on the subject, entitled *Coastal Erosion and Protection in Europe*. Fellows from every decade since 1965 represented the Trust at the reception, and 12 were from Wales.

Dr Kathy Seddon and Professor Williams.

Dr Seddon used her Churchill Fellowship to set up an international project called 'Arctic to the Mediterranean' This allowed schools across Europe to monitor butterflies as an indicators of climate change. The project ran for six years and was funded by the EU.

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DOYENNE OF THE GEM RETIRES AFTER 30 YEARS!

Pictures by **Mike Wilcock.**

Margaret cuts her special cake.

Saying it with flowers!

GEM colleagues turned out in force at the Duke of Wellington, Cowbridge, on Friday evening to bid an emotional farewell to the newspaper's longest-serving employee, Accounts Manager, Margaret Vanderwarker, who is putting away her pocket calculator this week after 30 years' service.

Editor Don John said: "There were smiles (and also a few tears in the eyes) as the very popular department manager heard warm tributes paid to someone whose quiet, reassuring presence behind the scenes has been taken for granted and who will be sadly missed by us all,"

GEM General Manager, Caroline Attya, told her: "It just will not be the same here without you. You have been a tower of strength to me personally and to all the staff for so many years. I cannot thank you enough, Margaret, and we all wish you good health and happiness in your retirement from the bottom of our hearts."

Margaret said: "I have enjoyed my time at The GEM so much and made so many friends. The staff at the newspaper have always been more than colleagues. What makes The GEM so special is that we are a true team. Caroline has been a great friend and not just a manager to me.

"I feel it is the right time to retire and spend time with my family, particularly my grandson, Jacques."

There were some surprises on the night, too – The GEM's very own 'Three Degrees', Jan, Sue and Wendy, sang 'When will I see you again?', the newspaper's film critic Gareth Jamieson performed old favourites such as 'I Saw Her Standing There'. Carolyn baked a truly spectacular cake, replete with five pound notes, and Wendy presented Margaret with a bouquet of flowers.

Margaret said: "I want to thank everyone who made it such an unforgettable evening."

The GEM has set one stipulation on Margaret's retirement – that she pops back in to see us when she has a free moment!

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Celebrating Penarth's 150th birthday... the arrival of the excavators! by Brian Keitch

WITH the arrival of the railway came the excavationists, many of Irish descent – their mission to dig one great big hole by the sea which was to become Penarth Dock.

Along with them came terraced houses, public houses and hotels. The natives of Penarth and adjoining parishes probably didn't know what had hit them!

The first task was to dump a mile-long embankment across the River Ely floodplain (plus a bridge over said waterway) to gain access to the site of the planned dock.

Isambard Kingdom Brunel, no less, had planned a dock here in 1836 'back to front' with the shipping access from the north via the River Ely – not as was subsequently built – with the locks direct out to sea (though Brunel had envisaged such a development).

Brunel's plan shows a 'ruin' on Llandough beach. This was the abandoned Ffarm Cogan Pill Isaf – ideally situated next to the pill and fishing activities.

The same farm is shown on the Hurst Estate map. It has been suggested that it might also have had a small boatyard. A hint of the days of smuggling and piracy? Could this have been the residence of John ap John of smuggling fame?

Work on the new dock started in earnest in August 1860. The contract went to Messrs Smith and Knight. Apart from the railway to Grangetown and on to Radyr (both lines still operate passenger and goods traffic to this day) stone was needed for the masonry in the construction of the new dock – and a lot of it – and it came by rail from a quarry in Radyr.

Initially, it appears work on the dock was painfully slow. However, getting the staff to undertake the work was scarcely a problem. People from Ireland (following the potato famine) had arrived in numbers (as well as many from across the Severn Sea from Gloucestershire, Somerset and Devon) seeking mainly labouring work.

In the 1841 Census, no mention is made of local people originating from the Emerald Isle. In 1851, the Irish were second only to the Welsh in the Penarth district (including Leckwith, Llandough, Cogan and Lavernock) – but this is probably insignificant as the population was still relatively small (466 inhabitants).

With the construction of the Ely Tidal Harbour and then Penarth Docks in quick succession, the local population surged to about 2,000, with 183 from Ireland (and no doubt many others living in Cardiff commuted to the works in Penarth – travelling either by ferry boat or by 'hitching' lifts on freight trains delivering stone in the construction of the docks – hence a number of fatalities involving men falling between moving wagons to and from work).

Indeed, a whole new Irish community was established in Cardiff called 'Newtown' around Tyndall Street, complete with a Roman Catholic church. Family surnames – Driscoll, O'Brien, Callaghan, Murphy, O'Leary etc, abound.

On the Census returns, the occupation of most (masons, labourers and – more to the point – excavators) were concerned with the construction of the docks, the excavators had arrived in numbers.

To accommodate them, terraced houses quickly sprang up around the dock site. To put things into context – in 1841 there were no named streets in the district to speak of – just farms, agricultural cottages and the like.

The same was the case ten years later but the Census of 1861 reveals seven terraced streets – still in situ today, viz: Ludlow Street, Salop Street, Glebe Street, John Street, Maughan Street (now Queen's Road), Windsor Place and down in Cogan, Pill Street.

That may not sound much, but large families (four or more children) were fairly commonplace at the time, in addition, many houses had lodgers in to make up the weekly income with sometimes two or more families squeezed into a terraced property! Penarth was fortunate to have an effective sewage system in place – though infant mortality remained high.

Local farms carried on much as they had done for generations – no doubt benefiting from supplying the new town in its infancy with essential foodstuffs: bread, milk, vegetables, meat etc. Some farmers in fact increased their holdings quite considerably – Cornerswell Farm had in 1871 some 200 acres (chiefly dairy); Cogan Hall Farm could boast some 400 acres; Coston Isaf 150 acres; Llandough Farm 160 acres; Ty Mawr 110 acres, and on a more modest scale Ivy Cottage with 45 acres (but in 1871 even this had expanded to 150 acres). The smallest seems to have been Rogersmoor, with just 22 acres under husbandry. Game was also on the agenda – Llandough had its own pheasantry (John Mawson of Toll Gate House was the gamekeeper) and Coed yr Hebog (falconwood translated into English) on Cornerswell Farm suggests another variant.

Excavators at Radyr quarry.

George Lewis of Llandough was employed as the local mole-catcher – not for supper, one hopes!

With the navvies came the pubs and 'hotels,' sometimes bearing the surnames of the local gentry who had a financial interest in them, viz, Windsor Hotel, Plymouth Hotel and Clive Arms. Other 'locals' go back to village life pre-docks such as the Merrie Harrier, Llandough (known locally as 'The Dog' – after the harrier dog – not the feathered variety) – subsequently rebuilt on its present site after a fire), the Dinas Powys trio Cross Keys, Three Horse Shoes and Star and the long closed Cardiff Arms in Leckwith (though the building survives).

Lavernock records suggest that the Pop Inn stood in the parish – but where?! Back then many rural public houses and inns brewed their own ale – often called home brew – so did the farmers! There was a 'Brewers' Cottage' attached to the original Merrie Harrier.

Meanwhile, back at the dock construction site, the 1861 Census enumerates some 143 excavators – though this was increased a couple of years later to speed up the works. The same Census numbers 139 non-agricultural labourers, 44 stonemasons, 36 carpenters, 12 blacksmiths (there were dozens of horses providing the equine muscle on site) and some 13 locomotive drivers providing the iron horse effort.

After a day's slog on site, no doubt the excavators wanted to slake their thirst and get their hands on some grub. Sailors from the world over were still a couple of years away – so no competition there. A stiff climb up the hill and then Glebe Street – Penarth's new town shopping centre – almost every property was a shop of some description.

Unlike today, there wasn't a tea or coffee shop in sight, and Windsor Road, what there was of it, was largely residential.

NEXT: Glebe Street, early 1860s – the 'shopping centre' of Penarth new town – a trip around the stores and maybe a pint or two...

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GEM ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

In Business Update

The Vale's oldest law firm merges with Glamorgan Law LLP

Richard Beech (on left) with Anthony Taylor.

GLAMORGAN LAW announced its merger with the Cowbridge practice of J Anthony Taylor on April 1.

Anthony Taylor, who has headed the Cowbridge office of Gaskell Walker in the High Street for many years, and now joins Glamorgan Law as a consultant, commented: "When my Bridgend-based former colleagues in Gaskell Walker decided to merge with another firm, I was delighted to have the opportunity to join forces with Glamorgan Law in Cowbridge.

"Glamorgan Law have built a formidable reputation, particularly since the merger with Larby Williams in 2011 and are, in my opinion, now the leading firm in Cowbridge and the Vale.

"This merger is excellent news for all my clients. Not only will they continue to receive the same quality of service they have come to expect, but the merger will open up a new range of specialism and depth of expertise to them."

Richard Beech, the partner in charge of Glamorgan Law's Cowbridge office, said: "I am extremely pleased that Anthony and his team have decided to join us. He has an excellent reputation for the quality of his advice and for looking after his clients' interest.

"This merger will add to our already considerable expertise in areas such as agricultural law, trusts, wills, tax, probate, property and business law."

Anthony Taylor and his father and grandfather before him have met the legal needs of private clients, businesses and landowners in Cowbridge and the Vale for over 100 years, building a loyal client following. Peter Davies, senior partner of Glamorgan Law, commented: "Anthony's practice has a long and impressive history and an excellent reputation. The merger is great news for our Cowbridge office, for the existing clients of both firms, and for all those needing legal services in Cowbridge and the Vale.

"Anthony and his colleagues share our values and aims. I am confident that his team will blend brilliantly with ours and that the merger will be a great success."

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'WALK OF WITNESS'

HUNDREDS of people are expected to join the two-mile "walk of witness" through the streets of Barry on Good Friday (April 3) to mark Christ's journey to the cross.

They will follow a 10 foot wooden cross and stop at five points of prayer and hear readings from the Bible about Christ's crucifixion.

The walk, which is in its fourth year, is organised by the Churches of Barry, made up of 11 of the town's churches of various denominations. The first walk was led by the Archbishop of Wales.

Organiser Father Robert Parrish, Rector of Merthyr Dyfan parish, said everyone was invited along to all or part of the walk. It will begin at Parade Gardens at noon and end with a service in King's Square which will start at about 1.30pm.

There will be four stops along the way - at the railway station, outside the One Stop store in Broad Street, the forecourt of AG Adams funeral home and King's Square.

"The idea behind this walk is to take church out to the people – because we are walking through the streets, people will come up to us to watch, listen and join in. It is very successful in getting the Christian message out onto the streets in a visible way," said Father Parrish.

The first 'station of the cross' will be at Parade Gardens and will be led by Canon Pat O'Gorman of St Helen's Roman Catholic Church, who will give an address.

The cross, made by students at Barry College, will then be carried up Ship Hill to the second station – outside Barry Railway Station, where the Rev Mike Holmes of Coastlands Family Church will deliver a short sermon.

The walk will continue along Broad Street, up Priory Hill to the third station which is at the One Stop Store in Broad Street, where the Rev Kevin Lake of All Saints will give an address.

Those taking part will then process along Broad Street to AG Adams funeral home for the fourth station, where the Rev Carole Challis, a Superintendent Methodist minister, will lead proceedings. Members of the relevant congregations will also give prayers and readings at the various stations.

The cross will then be taken up again along Holton Road through the shopping area to King's Square for the final station – which will be overseen by the Rev Clive Jones of Salem Baptist Church.

The Salvation Army Band will play and hot cross buns will be given out to passers by with a Christian message on the serviettes; 33 red balloons will be released, which signify Jesus' age.

After the service at King's Square ends, everyone is invited to go to Tabernacle Welsh Congregational church, in King's Square, for tea and hot cross buns. **AY**

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PICTURED: (from left) Adrian Jones, Cape; Ben Griffiths; Melanie Regan; Jack Burgess; Chris Davies.

Easter eggs and toys are donated to Ty Hafan hospice

WHEN Melanie Regan, business support assistant at Aberthaw Power Station, asked people from the site for contributions to an Easter egg appeal on behalf of local children's hospice Ty Hafan, the response was overwhelming.

Over 300 eggs were donated by station staff and colleagues from on-site contractors.

In addition to the sweet treats and chocolate, the team also collected soft toys, craft sets, books, egg hunt baskets and £260 in cash donations to ensure the families, staff and children at Ty Hafan have an 'eggstatic' holiday! All the donations have been delivered to Ty Hafan for their weekend Easter celebrations.

Aberthaw Power Station has contributed over £30,000 to the local hospice in 10 years and continues to support this fantastic local charity through fund-raising, donations for the charity shops and staff volunteering. Ty Hafan, based in Sully, provides support to life limited children and their families.

Melanie Regan commented: "The response from the teams onsite was amazing. I hope the collection of chocolate and toys will make the Easter weekend at Ty Hafan extra special."

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Old signal box in Barry torn down

IMAGES by MIKE WILCOCK

ABOVE: On Sunday a piece of Barry's history disappeared – the signal box by the town's train station. Mike Wilcock captured its final moments and commented: "It was built in 1897. I think people were shocked it was being demolished."

CHURCHES TOGETHER FOR GOOD FRIDAY

***PEOPLE from all the Churches of Barry will join together on Good Friday for the* annual two-mile Walk of Witness through the town.**

Father Robert Parrish, Rector of the Barry churches of St Paul's and Merthyr Dyfan and organiser of the walk said: "Everyone, children and adults, is warmly invited to join in at the start at the Parade Gardens at 12 noon, or anywhere en route."

The walk is being supported by churches of all denominations in Barry and will include children from church Sunday schools and youth clubs. Leaving the Parade Gardens, the walk will travel via Broad Streeet to arrive at King's Square in time for a special service for Good Friday at 1.30pm.

The wooden cross, made by Barry College, will be carried in the procession to re-enact Christ's carrying of his cross on the way to his crucifixion.

This is the fourth year of the Barry Walk of Witness which began in 2012, led by the Archbishop of Wales, Dr Barry Morgan.

Readers' Letters

Please keep your letters BRIEF and address them to: The Editor, at Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL or email gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

LETTERS AND E-MAILS MUST INCLUDE FULL ADDRESS AND A CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER

IMPORTANT: We reserve the right to edit all letters. We do NOT accept anonymous mail. An email address alone is not sufficient! We will (*in certain circumstances*) protect a writer's identity, if requested.

Miners' strike: 'the police were provoked'

I LOVE to read contributions from other GEM readers; one correspondent, in particular, has missed his vocation – or has he?

Marc Delaney must earn his living writing works of fiction, what else would explain his skewed view of the 1984 miners' strike? Here are a few indisputable facts:

Arthur Scargill engineered the miners' strike of 1984. He refused miners a vote on the strike action.

In the overwhelming majority of pit-head ballots in Wales and across the UK, miners rejected the strike.

Welsh miners were bullied/blackmailed into strike action by the threats of violent flying pickets, as used extensively against the Nottingham miners and the threat of 'scab'.

The Nottingham miners saw through Scargill, voted out his puppets in mid 1984 and then formed a new union.

The Lancashire coalfields were, like most coalfields, against the strike. Scargill agreed not to use his flying pickets on condition that the Lancashire miners would not cross picket lines.

Scargill had several opportunities to end the strike and on every occasion refused to put any offers to union members, in the knowledge that they would return to work.

The Labour party and other major unions did not and would not support Scargill.

Were the police over-zealous? Very possibly – but we have to remember the immense provocation that they faced daily from the flying pickets.

I am sure that Mr Delaney will have been shocked to see pictures of police men and women, faces covered in blood, after being hit by stones, broken bottles and various missiles thrown by the pickets.

Perhaps Mr Delaney should check his facts with ex-miners – I did, my wife's family worked for the NCB in Wales. **(Name and address supplied).**

NOTHING BUT PRAISE FOR NHS PROFESSIONALS

HAVING been diagnosed with a serious illness last year and subsequently spending much of my time in hospitals and GP surgeries, I'd like to add my voice to the growing number of people who have written to the papers recently to describe their experiences with the National Health Service.

The truth is that I have received a fantastic service over the last 12 months from every one of the health professionals that I have met or dealt with, and this is ongoing.

Yes, I could pick a few holes here and there, but they are very minor – and besides, couldn't the same be said of any major service?

I have had occasional long waits for a bed when there has been high demand on the service; but my experience of dealing with different departments and medical professionals during a full year of treatment has been one where they have all been extremely helpful, understanding and accommodating.

I have spent a great deal of that time on Ward 6 at the Princess of Wales Hospital and have had to attend Accident and Emergency on several occasions.

I cannot in any way fault the support that I have received, or the professionalism of the staff, as all have been helpful.

I'd like to thank everyone on Ward 6 and at A&E, and offer a special thank you to Doctor Lei and his team who have provided an absolutely first-rate service.

They have done their very best for me, and I think they deserve to be recognised for doing so.

Based on my own personal experience, I don't think anyone should be afraid of using the National Health Service when needed.

This very special resource works.

Mr Lyn Morgan, Brynmenyn.

GEM note: Mr Morgan is a Labour BCBC councillor, but emphasises that this letter is written in a personal capacity.

We welcome your news, views and other items of interest - email us at:
gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

Don't build in the Vale.. 'GO NORTH OF CARDIFF!'

WE are a group of residents from different parts of the Vale who are very concerned about the future direction of the Vale – as a result of the impact of the Deposit Local Development Plan, if eventually adopted in its current form without significant amendments – following consideration by the Inspector to be appointed by the Welsh Government.

We are concerned about the overall political and economic context in which planning developments for the Vale seem to be occurring. The likely merger of Cardiff City and Vale councils may more easily permit the extension of the development of Cardiff into the Vale by removal of planning restrictions.

This creation of a 'Greater Cardiff' can be viewed as being analogous to the expansion of London into the surrounding counties in the south-east of England.

We suspect that the political motive for wishing significant housing development in the Vale in the longer term is driven by the need to increase the economic output of south Wales as a whole, starting with the area immediately adjacent to Cardiff. Another driver is the perceived untapped economic potential of Barry, which is limited by poor access to the M4. Proposed road developments such as A48 trunking to improve connections to Cardiff Airport, we believe, are a smokescreen for the need to improve the connections between Barry and the M4.

The connections that the Barry economy requires are not in order to travel to the west or north, but to travel east to England.

In view of the likely development of the M4 relief road around the Brynglas tunnels, there may be increased need to try and complete the A4232 link road from Cardiff Bay to Cardiff Gate – and to link transport from Barry directly to the A4232 by a more efficient, dedicated, direct route to the south of Culverhouse Cross.

Whilst it may indeed be helpful to build a large settlement at Llandow to be able to underpin a new enterprise park at St Athan, it is in the long-term interests of the rejuvenation of the remainder of south Wales – particularly the valleys to the north and north-west of Cardiff – that efforts to stimulate the economy should be focused in these areas.

They already have transport, housing, education and other public infrastructure in place, such that all the investment monies can be focused on stimulation of business in these areas.

In an age where commerce is increasingly global, transacted and created digitally, investing scarce public resources in aiding and stimulating businesses in these areas should produce a much greater return on investment than putting down new concrete and brick in the Vale and continuing to neglect these established areas that desperately require investment.

The current planning targets for the Vale assume a large increase in the population. In the years 2006 to 2008 to 2011, the projected inward migration has been reassessed and downsized from 815 to 547 to 217 per year.

In view of this level of downsizing of estimates, and likely continuing very slow economic growth for many years ahead due to global (China, India, SE Asia competition) and domestic economic factors (national debt and continuing weak economic performance) we are unlikely of requiring this level of extra housing in the Vale.

There is no indication that its intrinsic population will grow by this number. It must thus be assumed that the proposed increase in housing requirement is in anticipation of a large net inward migration of people into the Vale.

Is this the migration of people from England, from abroad, or from areas such as the south Wales Valleys? It would cost much less public and private money in the digital economy that we seek for such extra housing not to be built.

These public and private monies would be wasted in duplicating infrastructure, dislocating communities, breaking up traditional support and caring mechanisms for the elderly and vulnerable in the population, and exacerbating the needs and financial dependence of those who remain in deprived areas of Wales. It would make far more sense at every level not to waste precious resources on duplicating infrastructure but to spend it where there is already infrastructure in place.

As we prepare for the possibility of debate about whether there should be increased powers for the Welsh government ahead of the elections in May 2016, politicians of all parties need to delineate in detail their policies for the long term economic development of the whole of Wales.

We must not stumble into a future of an overheated, unaffordable economic hotspot in south-east Wales with the remainder of Wales being much poorer, as has happened in England.

Leaders of all political parties at the Welsh Government and the Vale Council need to answer the following questions urgently:

Why are over 10,000 houses still needed in the Vale of Glamorgan to accommodate an increase of 217 persons per year?

Why not direct the investment of limited resources into established communities to the west and north of Cardiff instead of building houses in the Vale?

Will you complete the A4232 and build direct access to it from Barry to the south of Culverhouse Cross?

If a St Athan/airport enterprise zone is important, why won't concentrated development at Llandow industrial estate support it better than large housing developments in multiple, scattered villages?

Paul Williams, St Nicholas;
Tim Knowles, St Nicholas;
Karen Rogers, Dinas Powys;
James Regan, Dinas Powys;
Richard Norris, Llanblethian;
Dr David Webb, Llanblethian;
Prof R J Buswell, Cowbridge History Society;
Robert and Sian Evans, Ystradowen;
Kristian Grimes, Ystradowen.

'Cowbridge can't opt out of Vale'

ON the subject of the proposed new homes for Cowbridge, you may be aware that the acronym being used to refer to the attitude of the Vale Council to the proposed merger of authorities is ABC (*Anything But Cardiff*).

This resonates perfectly with the majority view, as reflected in letters published in your newspaper, around the proposal to build new homes at Cowbridge – Anywhere But Cowbridge... (preferably Barry!)

It seems to me that the residents of Cowbridge want all the benefits of being part of the Vale, such as a brand new school building – but don't want to carry some of the responsibilities associated with belonging to a large unitary authority in a mixed urban/rural geography e.g. taking its share of the demand for new housing.

Maybe the real truth is that all those new houses might adversely affect the 'exclusivity' that Cowbridge seems to wish to bask in.

We have just returned from a short trip to north Wales, where we took time to visit the Italianate village of Portmeirion. Many of the those who visit are making a pilgrimage to see where the cult 1960s TV series *The Prisoner* was made.

This featured a group of people who live in a small enclosed community with its own rules etc.

My suggestion to those deniers of change (NIMBYs?) in Cowbridge is maybe you can become a south Wales offshoot of Portmeirion, or as an alternative, become a geographically remote part of the Isle of Wight, where they seem to encourage a feeling of 1950s 'olde worlde' living.

Nick Meyrick, Barry.

'Time is right to leave EU'

READING the recent letter from David Kennet, and his comments on the cost of leaving the EU, and listening to various politicians over the past few months (notably Paddy Ashdown and Ken Clarke, both EU fanatics) I must say that I find their reasoning for staying in the EU laboured.

Every one of these politicians predicts doom and gloom for our economy, jobs, etc, but how on earth can they foresee what will happen?

I recently purchased items of fruit and veg at a local supermarket and the grapes came from South Africa and the corn on the cob from Senegal. Are they part of the EU?

My reasoning for pulling out of this club is as follows: we are soon to vote at a general election to elect our future Government.

We have been given this vote because it is part of the freedom and democracy that we have in this country.

Can someone tell me when we voted to become part of the EU in its current form?

The EU is nothing but an unelected, corrupt, undemocratic institution, that thrives on forcing its will on the people.

Let's go back a bit to the EU Treaty: this had to be ratified by all EU nations. Southern Ireland voted against this, but was forced to vote again until a yes vote was achieved; is this democracy?

We are electing a Government which will be tied to all the rules and regulations of Brussels and there is not one thing they can do about it.

When you have deals being done by the likes of Angela Merkel and the French President behind closed doors, what chance has anyone got?

The British Government cannot even reduce VAT, or reduce the tax on petrol without the EU's permission.

The time is right to get out of this corrupt club, and spend the money on our own people.

DJ Radford, Barry.

'Unedifying game of treachery'

AN interesting talk by Sir Richard Dearlove, former head of MI6 recently, reported in The GEM last week headed '*Tales of HM Secret Service*' was all about the 'hall of mirrors' – intelligence work in Prague, Paris and Geneva etc.

Surely, all persons who serve a foreign intelligence agency are traitors to their home countries? Some for money, some ideologically, some to relieve mundane lives; some because of 'honeytraps'.

In Communist days, I was targeted in 1983 by the Czechoslovak foreign intelligence service. At the time, I was (mistakenly) perceived as a rising Labour star, a young general election candidate (Monmouth).

I played along for a time, then reported the contacts to MI5 who came to south Wales to debrief me, and presumably to take action.

As Kim Philby is regarded as a traitor to GB, so is Oleg Gordievsky to Russia (then the Soviet Union).

They both, and others, have much in common! It is an unedifying game!

Christopher Short, Barry.

HGV road check

SINCE the closure of the Ewenny railway bridge, what actions are the parish and Vale councils taking to ensure HGV traffic does not use the coastal diversion? Evidence suggests very little!

Sally Carnall, St Brides Major.

Macmillan fundraiser

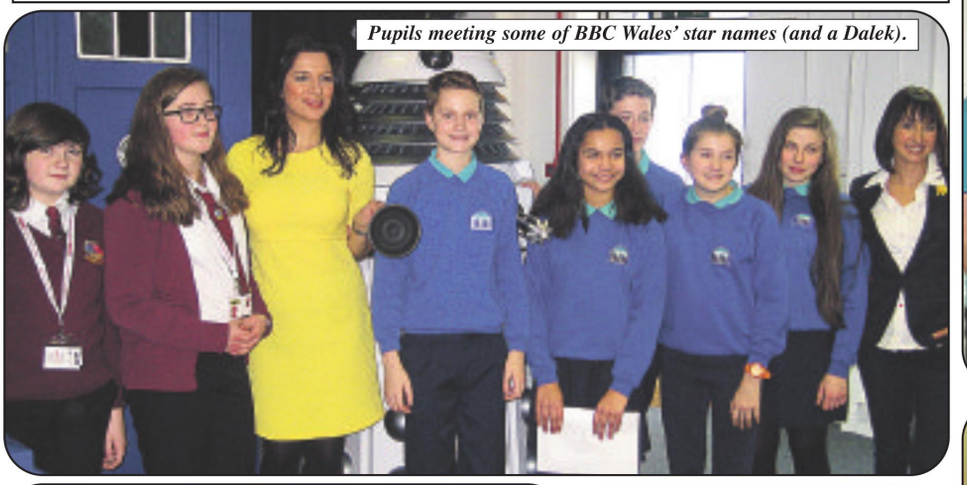
THE Pontyclun & District Macmillan Fundraising Support Group are staging their second variety show night on Friday, April 17, at Llanharry Workingmen's Club at 7.30pm.

Tickets £6 including interval food and a lucky ticket number. Acts include: Stagecoach performance troupe; Shelly Fairplay, harpist; Spencer Martin, comedian; Ploughsingers male voice choir; Bryan Gunton, magician and mind reader; Verity-Belle Atkinson, vocalist; and Daniel Cadogan, vocalist.

Tickets available from The Flowerpot, Rybech Homes, The Community Shop (Pontyclun) or contact Pat on 07974 183987; Edwina on 07710 198617; or Yvonne on 07878 015744.

Pupils to star in Welsh version of Les Miserables

NEWS FROM YSGOL BRO MORGANNWG



Pupils meeting some of BBC Wales' star names (and a Dalek).

The four pupils who will perform in Les Miserables

Rotary Young Speakers Huw Jones, Twm Aled and Indeg Evans.

Oxford Union debaters Jordan Stavrakis and Dafydd Foster-Davies.

Brennig Davies, Megan Davies and Elin Alexander at the English Speaking Union public speaking competition.

Les Miserables (in Welsh!)

Congratulations to Alun Rees, Llinos Jones, Manon Ogwen Parry and Jodi Bird who have been chosen in the cast of a Welsh language performance of *Les Miserables* being staged by the Urdd as part of the Wales Millennium Centre 10th anniversary celebrations.

Around 400 from across Wales auditioned and they will be part of a cast of 120 chosen to perfom.

Safer Internet Day

RECENTLY, Ysgol Bro Morgannwg hosted Eleri Thomas, deputy Children's Commissioner for Wales, along with representatives from the Welsh Government, for Safer Internet Day.

Pupils took part in a range of workshops and activities relating to safe use of the internet and also had the opportunity to give the teachers advice and tips on using apps and social networks.

Public speaking and debating

DURING the term, pupils have taken part in a variety of public speaking and debating competitions.

Jordan Stavrakis and Dafydd Foster-Davies reached the final of the Oxford Schools Debating Competition, held at Oxford Union on March 14.

Efa Cray.

Tanwen Cray.

Nel Lewis.

Urdd Eisteddfod performers included Llinos a Manon (above) and Efa, Tanwen and Nel (left).

Brennig Davies, Megan Davies and Elin Alexander of year-10 took part in the Wales final of the English Speaking Union Public Speaking competition at Tŷ Hywel. Brennig Davies was awarded the prize of outstanding speaker for his speech 'Those who can make us believe absurdities can make us commit atrocities.'

Huw Jones, Twm Aled and Indeg Evans of Year-8 reached the final of the Rotary Youth Speaks competition.

BBC School Report

YEAR-8, 9 and 10 students have been busy working with the BBC preparing for the special BBC School Report Day and practising their journalism skills.

Year -8 spent the day at the BBC studios in Cardiff preparing, scripting and broadcasting news and weather bulletins and were heard and seen live on various programmes.

Year-9 have been working with Year-7 and the feeder primary school to produce a magazine. Year-10 have prepared a Welsh and English package for radio and television on the lasting effect of *Gavin and Stacey* on Barry Island which can be seen on the BBC and school website.

Visit *www.bromorgannwg.org.uk/bbcproject* to see the items and photos from the day.

Urdd Eisteddfod

PUPILS from all years at the school have recently competed at the Cardiff and Vale Regional Urdd Eisteddfod in a variety of competitions both on and off stage.

Congratulations to those who won and will now compete at the National Urdd Eisteddfod in Caerphilly during May half term.

WHAT'S ON?

Easter fayre

COWBRIDGE Rotary will be holding an Easter fayre in Cowbridge Old Hall Gardens on Easter Sunday (April 5) at 2.30pm.

Main events include an Easter egg hunt and a parade of Easter bonnets and hats with prizes for children up to eight years.

There will be an extraordinary show of Heritage chickens and towering fowl, a display of owls, games, refreshments, stalls and a visit by the white rabbit!

History talk

COWBRIDGE History Society's next lecture on Friday, April 10 at 7.30pm in the Lesser Hall of the Town Hall, Cowbridge, will be 'The Edmondes and Cowbridge: Family, Land and Old Hall', by Dick Buswell of the society. All are welcome!

Note: there is no meeting on Good Friday.

COWBRIDGE CRICKET CLUB STAR'S SUCCESS

Laurie – *and Wales* – make the under-19 cricket final in the desert

LAURIE THOMAS from Llansannor has just completed an under-19s Welsh Women's international cricket tour of Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

The squad reached the final of the Women's Arch Trophy, beating Essex in a nail-biting one-run victory.

Wales also enjoyed a comprehensive 10-wicket win over a UAE international XI – although they were beaten by an experienced Loughborough side in the final.

Laurie, aged 17, started playing cricket at the age of 10, when she represented Llansannor Primary School in a cricket competition at the SWALEC stadium Cardiff.

Her interest and involvement in cricket expanded when she was asked to attend cricket development training for girls, and quickly progressed to the Cardiff and Vale girls' county squad.

Laurie then joined Cowbridge Cricket Club. Being the only girl at the time did not faze her as everyone welcomed her and she was soon part of the under-11s team, progressing to playing for the senior Firsts and Seconds last season.

Wales under-19 cricketer Laurie Thomas.

Laurie made the under-13s Welsh cricket squad at the age of 12 and has been selected annually up to the under-17s.

Being picked for the under-19s Welsh tour was an amazing honour. The tour has really developed Laurie's cricket and she has developed into an accurate medium-pace bowler.

Laurie would like to encourage more girls to play cricket. If there are any girls who would like to give cricket go, go online to: *www.cowbridgecrickeclub.co.uk* for training times.

Laurie said: "I'd like to thank Cowbridge Cricket Club for all its support over the years and helping me to fund-raise for the cricket tour to Abu Dhabi and Dubai." **KT**

Spring LLANTWIT MAJOR Feature

How the Llantwit Major town centre stayed strong through difficult times

ABOVE: The Flower Shop

The Flower Shop
THE FLORIST FOR ALL OCCASIONS
Happy Easter
to all our Customers
CHECK OUT OUR GIFT RANGE TOO...
01446 792264 • www.llantwitmajorflowershop.co.uk
2 Barons Close House, East Street, LLANTWIT MAJOR

IT is pretty much a truism these days that town centres are in decline as they come under attack from online shopping, big city shopping malls, and out of town retail centres, writes PHILIP IRWIN.

Visit any small town in the UK and you will find the likes of Mary Portas coming up with a plan to "save" the local high street.

In south Wales, it's not difficult to find town centres that are on their last legs – which makes Llantwit Major's ability to buck this trend over the last few years all the more remarkable.

A number of factors came together over the last three years and it has led to new businesses opening, and these have added to the variety in the town.

The Boverton Road regeneration scheme smartened up the main shopping area, at the same time improving the car parking.

The Vale of Glamorgan railway line was upgraded, with more regular train journeys from Bridgend, Barry and Cardiff available. While this took a while to kick in, traders in the town are starting to notice a real difference now, with more visitors saying they took the train.

Another factor was that small shops within the precinct were made available as 'pop ups', giving new businesses a chance to test the waters – and some went on to make the move to Llantwit permanent – moving on then to bigger premises.

Finally, the Vale Council tourism unit's decision to market Llantwit as a combined heritage site and as a centre for walking in the Vale (particularly along the coast) is showing real signs of progress.

More and more people are coming to appreciate and value the old part of town, with its narrow roads and distinctive old buildings.

The development of the Galilee Chapel in St Illtud's Church, which makes such an impressive feature of the ancient Celtic crosses, has added an extra string to the town's heritage bow.

There are still a small number of vacant units in the town – there is an inevitable turnover in the retail trade – but things are looking good for this charming town.

One retailer said: "Llantwit is a relaxed shopping centre, where you can just turn up. There's no need to dress up when you shop here!"

Town centre traders are also feeling a sense of relief after Sainsbury's dropped plans to open a store on the outskirts of the town, at Llanmaes.

Stuart Sloan runs Sloan & Co in the Poundfield Centre and is optimistic about the prospects for the town centre. He said: "We can't say with 100 per cent certainty that Sainsbury's have given up, but it has gone quiet now".

He said that it left retailers free to concentrate on serving customers old and new: "We are noticing more visitors in the town, particularly walkers as you see groups out and about with the walking poles.

"The train has made a difference, too. when we ask people how thay travelled to Llantwit, an increasing number say they came by rail."

Mr Sloan added that there was evidence of more visitors coming by bus, due to the new 321 service that links Barry and Bridgend, via various Vale towns and villages.

He said: "This is harder to quantify, but the signs that this way of getting to Llantwit is growing."

ABOVE: Some of the team at the Wyndham House Dental Practice.

On a personal note, he said that the last 12 months had been very productive for Sloan & Co.

"We have updated our range, with garments, bags and accessories, and our slogan 'The Vale's budget boutique' sums us up perfectly.

"There's no item over £40, but there is plenty of choice!"

Also in Poundfield is Nickleby's Books, which is run by John Woods. He is proud of the fact that Llantwit still supports an independent book store, and trade is holding up well.

He feels personal service, plus the willingness to order any book for his customers, has been a major factor in the company's success.

He said: "I think you have to accept that there is a need to offer a discount to compete, and I'm very, very grateful for the support we have received.

He is encouraged that reading is still popular with children and, to make sure that stays the case, he has increased the range of children's books.

In East Street, another business that has seen its faith in Llantwit Major rewarded is The Flower Shop in East Street, run by mother and daughter Wendy and Sarah Thomas.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)

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Are your feet ready for spring?

HOPEFULLY, we are fast approaching the time when we will be able to get out our sandals and for some it's the first time you've had a good look at your feet.

Are they ready to display or are you embarrassed of how they look? No amount of nail varnish will disguise nails that are neglected.

Cracked heels? No problem. We can help make them look and feel great again.

We are happy to help make your feet sandal ready.

Vale Podiatry is HCPC registered, so you can be sure that you are in safe hands.

With all foot problems, large or small, we can help. Angela and Sarah, friendly, professional podiatrists, look forward to meeting you.

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www.valepodiatry.co.uk
hcpc

Tony Bennett
THANK YOU
to everyone in Llantwit Major who voted for me at the recent local election. You have my assurance, I will work hard for all the people of Llantwit Major.

Spring LLANTWIT MAJOR Feature

Llantwit Major... the Mayor's View

THE GEM asked the Mayor of Llantwit Major, Coun Mick Mason, for his views on his home town.

I HAVE lived in Llantwit Major for over 40 years, during which time there have been so many changes to enhance all areas of the town and access to what is now the 'Gateway' to the Heritage Coast.

The re-opening of the rail link provided a much-needed boost for both inhabitants and visitors, although maybe the bus service is in need of further improvement.

The Boverton Road regeneration brought new life into the shopping area and recently we have seen the opening of several new shops selling a variety of goods. We have a Yankee Candle shop, several new cafes have opened, ladies and gents hairdressers, beauty salons and nail bars.

You can even top up your tan without going to the Med, we have ladies clothes shops, and we can even boast a tattoo parlour.

We are well served by two supermarkets and have restaurants and take aways for those who don't want to cook.

The old town is picturesque and peaceful, the town square, with three pubs around it, is a popular place at weekends, with entertainment and the occasional beer festival.

Visitors from all over the world come to see our beautiful St Illtud's Church and the recently restored Galilee Chapel, and explore the town on foot following the Blue Plaque Trail, new fingerposts and visitors' notice boards are currently a work in progress.

After exploring the town, it is a short walk through lovely countryside to Colhugh Beach and the Heritage Coast. You can even refresh yourself at the Beach Cafe before venturing further along the Wales Coastal Path, east to Aberthaw or west to St Donat's.

I am proud to say I have had the honour and privilege to be Mayor of such a beautiful and historic town.

Town is open for business and has so much to offer!

ABOVE: Stuart Sloan of Slaon & Co.

ABOVE: Books galore at Nickleby's.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

They feel they know their customers really well and, after 20 years in the town, they have built up a loyal customer base.

When The GEM dropped in, Sarah was recovering from a busy Mother's Day, and getting ready for another surge over Easter.

She said: "We find that bouquets and Spring planted baskets are popular over Easter."

Another business with strong roots in the town is the Wyndham Dental Practice. Spokeswoman Sian Allers told The GEM: "The practice opened in 2001 with two surgeries and five staff. Thanks to the support we have received from the town, we have grown to five surgeries and 17 staff.

"We pride ourselves on our service, and it's great to be in an area where there is so much for visitors and residents alike."

There always were many reasons to spend time in Llantwit Major, but to some extent the town hid its light under a bushel.

Now, partly as a result of the changes and new developments, more and more people are visiting and growing to appreciate the town's charms.

Whether you are a walker, amateur historian, shopper, simply someone who likes to relax in a peaceful ambience, perhaps with a bite to eat or a drink, then Llantwit is the place to be!

NICKLEBY'S Bookstore

We have a wide range in stock - including children's books, novels, local history, hobbies, cookery, biography, sport - many at bargain prices, and offer a next-day book-ordering service for items not in stock.

Opening Times: Monday-Saturday 09.30-13.00; 13.30 to 17.00.

www.nicklebysbookstore.co.uk

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6 Poundfield Precinct, LLANTWIT MAJOR

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Discover our *fabulous* spring ranges at the Vale's *only* budget boutique this Easter

Featured tops - Saloos lined split back £35

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Tel: 01446 794642

www.sloancompany.co.uk

Another "Eggcellent" GEM Competition

Join in the fun, & WIN Easter Eggs!

Can you find the rabbits hiding in Llantwit Major?

We have **6** rabbits hiding in the windows of various businesses.

Write down as many rabbits' names you can find along with your name & phone number.

You can email your answer to gemsales@tindlenews.co.uk.
Normal competition rules apply.
Closing date 10th April 2015.

4 lucky winners will each win an easter egg!

Beavers hold presentation after gala

IMAGES by JOHN O'BEIRNE

ON March 21 Barry Beavers held their gala at Barry Leisure Centre.

The club came second out of the seven Welsh clubs competing.

Alun Cairns and Vale Mayor Howard Hamilton were among those on hand to present prizes to the winners.

A number of club members also notched up personal bests.

More winners featured next week.

THE following letter has been received concerning the wrap around The GEM last week. It is important to note that this was an advertisement, paid for by the Conservative Party through voluntary donations.

As such it does not, in any way, reflect the views of The GEM, which prides itself on its impartiality as a local community newspaper.

'Advert raises important issues'

THE wrap-around advert for the local Conservative candidate that arrived with last week's GEM raises a number of important issues, I feel.

Of course, political parties are perfectly entitled to purchase advertising space in newspapers and elsewhere. Money talks in British politics, sadly not always in the public interest as has been evidenced by the recent expenses and cash for influence scandals.

Mr Cairns was himself caught up in the expenses fiasco for, legitimately but perhaps unwisely, claiming expenses for a Cardiff Bay flat when he lived a short drive away in Ewenny.

Openness and transparency in this election campaign is important, so I would like to ask all the Vale of Glamorgan candidates an open question: Who is funding their campaigns? Are their backers resident in the UK and do they pay their fair share of taxes, as the vast majority of constituents do?

Jeff Evans,
Llantwit Major.

AM's 'breakfast' event welcomes Older People's Commissioner

ABOVE: Jane Hutt AM at the college's hospitality suite with students, staff, Sarah Rochira, Older People's Commissioner, Vale Mayor Coun Howard Hamilton and Barry Mayor Coun Jeff Evans and guests.

VALE AM Jane Hutt hosted her fifteenth 'Spring Breakfast' on March 27 at Cardiff and Vale College Barry campus, with the theme, 'Ageing Well in Wales.'

The guest speaker was Sarah Rochira, the Older People's Commissioner for Wales and guests included third sector organisations and the Over 50s Forum.

The breakfasts were cooked and presented by the hospitality students at Cardiff and Vale College.

Jane Hutt said: "This year's Spring Breakfast theme was about older people and I was delighted to introduce our excellent speaker, Sarah Rochira to talk about the 'Ageing Well in Wales Programme'.

"This programme – the first of its kind in the UK – contributes to and complements the Welsh Government's Strategy for Older People and champions a positive attitude towards ageing and the benefits an ageing society brings."

You can find The GEM on Facebook and Twitter – find us at facebook.com/GlamorganGEM and follow us @gem_news

THE RISE AND FALL OF CONCORDE...

HEATHROW to New York-JFK in less than half the time that other airliners took – that was Concorde, a supersonic passenger jet airliner jointly developed and produced by the British Aircraft Corporation (BAC) and Aerospatiale.

With a maximum speed of 1,340 mph and flying at a height of 60,000 feet with 92 – 128 passengers, it flew regular transatlantic flights from London Heathrow to New York-JFK, Washington Dulles and Barbados. Concorde is regarded by many people as an aviation icon and an engineering marvel; it was.

John Evans, a member of Penarth Aviation Society will give a personal view on April 10 of how the concept of an SST came about and some of the innovative engineering that went into producing the aircraft.

After a brief mention of its service life, he will look at the tragic events that led to the fatal crash and the eventual withdrawal of Concorde to various museums.

John, who joined BAC Filton just before the Anglo-French agreement to build the aircraft was signed, was in charge of the analytical laboratory for just over three years. In that time, materials that went into Concorde passed through the lab so he will give us an insight into some of the hiccups that occurred during the early years.

Brian Thomas, another of our members, was heavily involved with the Concorde project as general manager of the Concorde support division for the British Aircraft Corporation (BAC) and Aerospatiale.

The Aviation Society's meeting takes place on Friday, April 10 (7.45 for 8pm) at the Conservative Club, Stanwell Road Penarth. Visitors are welcome to attend the presentation (a donation of £2 is requested).

This will be followed by a business session for members only. Following this, there is a social to which visitors are welcome. To ensure seating availability, contact: Edward Oliver – mobile: 07941 758 212. Further details can be seen on the society's website and on Facebook.

BARRIE HOWELL

Molly overcomes her fears to abseil 160ft and raise funds for centre

A TEAM of staff and supporters have abseiled 160 ft down the Clifton Avon Gorge – to raise money for unwanted cats and kittens at Cats Protection Bridgend adoption centre.

The team of seven all completed their abseils safely, raising over £1,400 in the process. Molly Hughes, deputy manager said, "The thought of going over the cliff was nerve-racking, but I am very glad to have been able to overcome my fear and complete the challenge.

"It was an exhilarating experience which was especially rewarding, as we were able to raise a lot of money to help cats in the centre."

One of the cats benefitting is Buttercup, a two-year-old heavily pregnant cat, who was admitted because of her owner's change in circumstances. She has since given birth to five beautiful kittens named Daffodil, Bun, Choccy, April and Bonnet. Buttercup is one of 133 unwanted cats and kittens in the centre's care, many of whom are looking for a new start in life.

Sue Dobbs, centre manager said: "We are delighted with the amount of money we have raised and would like to thank everyone who has sponsored us. We don't receive any government funding; all our work is reliant on the generosity of the public."

Bridgend Adoption Centre is one of the largest and busiest in the UK. Last year, the centre found new homes for over 1450 cats and kittens. If you would like to adopt a cat or make a donation then ring 01656 724396 or email bridgend@cats.org.uk

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YSGOL GWAUN Y NANT

CAFWYD diwrnod o gystadlu brwd yn ddiweddar yn Ysgol Gymraeg Gwaun y Nant wrth i lysoedd yr ysgol – Cadog, Gildas a Dyfan gystadlu am gwpan Eisteddfod yr ysgol. Bu'r plant a'r athrawon yn brysur yn paratoi ar gyfer amrywiaeth o gystadlaethau yn amrywio o gelf, technoleg gwybodaeth, canu, adrodd a llawysgrifen.

Roedd y cystadlu o safon uchel iawn a'r beirniad, y gantores Gwawr Edwards, wedi ei phlesio yn arw.

Uchafbwynt y dydd oedd y Seremoni Cadeirio. Tasg eleni oedd ysgrifennu cerdd ar y thema 'Y Peiriant Sgrech'. Unwaith eto roedd y safon yn uchel iawn a bu dathlu mawr gan Lys Gildas wrth i'r beirniad, Rhydian Lloyd, gyhoeddi taw Caitlin Davies oedd enillydd Y Gadair. Llongyfarchiadau mawr iddi!

(Gweler Caitlyn yn eistedd yn y gadair gyda beirniad y dydd Gwawr Edwards ac aelodau'r Orsedd)

Aeth nifer o enillwyr y dydd ymlaen i gynrychioli'r ysgol yn yr Eisteddfod Gylch.

Caitlyn yn eistedd yn y Gadair gyda beirniad y dydd Gwawr Edwards ac aelodau'r Orsedd

Caglu arian ar gyfer y NSPCC a Tŷ Hafan

YN ddiweddar, yn dilyn trafodaeth â chynrychiolwyr yr elusen, fe benderfynodd y Cyngor Ysgol gasglu arian ar gyfer y NSPCC. Gwnaed hyn drwy gasglu arian noddedig ar gyfer cymryd rhan mewn amrywiaeth o weithgareddau corfforol yn yr ysgol. Roedd ymateb y plant yn anhygoel gyda dros £1,600 yn cael ei gasglu.

Cafodd y siec ei gyflwyno i Sara Phillips yn ystod gwasanaeth arbennig. Dywedodd ei bod wedi ei syfrdanu gydag ymateb gwych y disgyblion a byddai'r arian yn gwneud gwahaniaeth er gwell i nifer o blant.

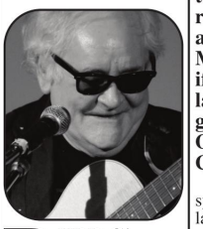
Yn ogystal â hyn penderfynodd disgyblion yr Adran Iau gyfrannu'r elw a wnaethant yn ystod Wythnos Fusnes i Dŷ Hafan. Sefydlwyd busnes ymhob dosbarth a pharatowyd nwyddau ar gyfer gwerthu mewn ffair fusnes yn neuadd yr ysgol. Cyflwynwyd siec o dros £400 i Shelly Kirkham a oedd yn cynrychioli'r elusen.

Dywedodd Mr Rhydian Lloyd, Prifathro, "Rwy'n falch iawn o ddisgyblion yr ysgol. Y nhw benderfynodd at ba elusennau byddai'r arian yn mynd. Doedd dim dylanwad o gwbl gan aelodau staff. Mae'r ffaith eu bod am helpu eraill yn dangos eu natur ofalgar."

Cyngor yr Ysgol yn cyflwyno siec i Shelly Kirkham, cynrychiolydd o Dŷ Hafan

Sara Phillips (NSPCC), Michael Gibbs a Pheobe Hinton

Gigs Bach y Fro



BYDD Gigs Bach y Fro yn dychwelyd unwaith eto i Benarth ar gyfer gig mis Ebrill – gyda noson gwych o gerddoriaeth gan Gareth Bonello a Meic Stevens! Cynhelir y gig yn y Windsor Arms, Penarth, ar nos Wener Ebrill 24ain, gyda'r drysau yn agor am 8pm.

I archebu tocynnau (£8 yr un) o flaen llaw, cysylltwch â ffion@menterbromorgannwg.org neu ffoniwch (029) 20689888.

Caiff y prosiect ei drefnu mewn partneriaeth rhwng Menter Bro Morgannwg a Chlwb Ifor Bach, dan nawdd Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru. Cydnabyddir hefyd gefnogaeth BOOM Pictures Cymru a Chyngor Tref y Barri.

Angharad

ROEDD hi'n anodd peidio colli deigryn wrth weld y lluniau a darllen y teyrngedau roddwyd yn angladd Rhodri Miller, y bachgen ifanc 17 oed a laddwyd gyda'i gariad Alesha O'Connor a'i ffrind Corey Price.

Doedd hi ddim syndod bod cannoedd lawer yn gorfod ymgynnull tu allan i Eglwys Sant Cadog i wrando ar y gwasanaeth ar uchel seinyddion ac roedd gweld y llun o'r dair golomen wen a ryddhawyd i'r awyr i gynrychioli bywydau'r tri ifanc yn gwbl dorcalonnus – tri oedd yn llawn bywyd â dyfodol cyffrous o'u blaenau wedi eu colli yn ddirdynnol a chreulon o sydyn.

Ni wyddom ar hyn o bryd union amgylchiadau'r ddamwain ond mae un peth yn sicr – mae'n rhaid i bobl ifanc gael eu gwarchod yn well rhag y peryglon tu ôl olwyn y car. Dengys yr ystadegau yn glir mai damweiniau car yw'r rheswm pennaf dros achosi marwoalethau pobl ifanc.

Yn America mae pob talaith erbyn hyn wedi cyflwyno trwyddedau gyrru graddol i bobl ifanc er mwyn eu gwarchod. Mae tri cham i'r drwydded. Yn ystod cam un ceir trwydded lle mae'n rhaid cael cyfnod penodol o wersi. Ar ôl pasio'r prawf mae cam rhif dau yn gyfnod lle nad oes gan y gyrrwr ifanc hawl i fynd â pherson ifanc yn y car gydag ef neu hi a does dim hawl i yrru yn y tywyllwch. Ar ôl cyfnod o tua blwyddyn wedyn gellid hawlio trwydded lawn. Yn sgil cyflwyno'r trwyddedau graddol fe laddwyd 59% yn llai o bobl ifanc 17 oed.

Yma, ym 1983 daeth y ddeddf i rym yn mynnu fod pawb yn gwisgo gwregys diogelwch. Cyflwynwyd deddfau yfed a gyrru llym er mwyn atal damweiniau a marwolaethau; codwyd rhwystrau ffyrdd ac uchafswm gyrru o 20 milltir yr awr ar ffyrdd poblog – yn enwedig yn agos i ysgolion. Ac fe warchodir plant bach wrth fynnu eu bod yn eistedd mewn seddi pwrpasol.

Onid yw hi'n bryd felly i'n pobl ifanc ni gael eu gwarchod hefyd? Ac efallai mai'r modd orau bosib i gofio am y tri ifanc o'r Barri fyddai ysgogiad i greu deddf newydd yn eu henw nhw.

Llwyddiannau Eisteddfod yr Urdd

MAE hi wedi bod yn fis anhygoel i'r Urdd yn y rhanbarth. Gyda dros fil a hanner o gystadleuwyr ar y llwyfan a channoedd o ddarnau o gelf a chrefft mae tipyn o lwyddiant wedi bod.

Dyma'r rhai fydd yn cynrychioli'r Fro yn Eisteddfod Genedlaethol yr Urdd yng Nghaerffili.

Oedran Cynradd

Deuawd Blwyddyn 6 ac iau: Cesia a Caitlin (Iolo Morganwg).

Parti Unsain Bl 6 ac iau - Iolo Morganwg.

Parti Deulais Bl 6 ac iau – Iolo Morganwg.

Parti Cerdd Dant i Ddysgwyr – Ysgol Sully.

Côr Cerdd Dant - Ysgol Pen y Garth.

Llefaru Unigol Bl 5 a 6: Efa Rowlands (Iolo Morganwg).

Llefaru unigol i ddysgwyr Bl 2 ac iau: Anwen Falcon.

Oedran Uwchradd – Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg

Unawd Merched Bl 7 i 9: Efa Angharad Cray.

Deuawd Bl 7 i 9: Huw a Nel.

Unawd Merched Bl 10 a dan 19 oed: Manon Ogwen Parry.

Deuawd Bl 10 a dan 19 oed: Manon a Llinos.

Parti Merched Bl 7 i 9.

Côr Bl 7 i 9.

Côr Merched Bl 13 ac iau.

Alaw Werin Bl 7 i 9: Nel Rhys Lewis.

Alaw Werin Bl 10 a dan 19 oed: Llinos Haf Jones.

Unawd Cerdd Dant Bl 7 i 9: Indeg Melangell Evans.

Deuawd Cerdd Dant Bl 9 ac iau: Huw a Nel.

Unawd Cerdd Dant Bl 10 a dan 19 oed: Llinos Haf Jones.

Dawns Werin Bl 7 i 9.

Dawns Werin Bl 10 a dan 19 oed.

Llefaru Unigol Bl 10 a dan 19 oed: Tanwen Mair Cray.

Grŵp Llefaru Bl 10 a dan 19 oed.

Ymgom Bl 7 i 9.

Cyflwyniad Dramatig Bl 7 i 9.

Cyflwyniad Dramatig Bl 10 a dan 19 oed.

Unawd allan o Sioe Gerdd Bl 10 a dan 19 oed: Llinos Haf Jones.

Hoffwn ddiolch i bawb wnaeth cymryd rhan yn unrhyw Eisteddfod a diolch i bawb sydd wedi bod wrthi'n gweithio'n galed i sicrhau llwyddiant ein Heisteddfodau.

Pob lwc i'r criw fydd yn mynd ymlaen i'r Eisteddfod Genedlaethol ym mis Mai gan obeithio gwelwn ni nifer ohonoch chi yna.

Mae beirniadu genedlaethol yn yr adran Celf a Chrefft yn digwydd yn ystod gwyliau Pasg ac fe fydd canlyniadau llawn yn yr erthygl nesaf.

Os hoffech fwy o wybodaeth am weithgareddau'r Urdd yn yr ardal cysylltwch ar geraint@urdd.org.

Geraint Scott

SER EIRY

BLWYDDYN Newydd Dda! Mae'r flwyddyn astrolegol yn dechrau ar Fawrth 21 – gydag – ARIES.

Arwydd cyntaf y Sidydd. Arwydd tân o dan reolaeth y planed Mawrth.

Mae hyn y golygu eich bod yn arweinydd naturiol ac yn casau dilyn pobl eraill. Mi fyddwch yn disgleirio mewn sefyllfa o awdurdod neu fel trefnydd. Gwell gyda chi bob amser ddilyn eich trywydd eich hunan, ac yn eich amser eich hunan. Mae tuedd ynnoch chi weithiau i anwybyddu anghenion pobl eraill gan eich bod yn canoblwyntio cymaint ar eich anghenion eich hunan.

Ond weithiau bydd yr holl hunan hyder 'na yn cuddio rhywfaint o ansicrwydd. Rydych chi'n ddewr iawn, yn llawn ynni, ac yn llawer iawn o hwyl mewn cwmni. Rych chi wrth eich bodd gyda her ym mhob peth, ac os nad yw'r her yno gallwch ddiflasu a cholli diddordeb. Rydych chi'n anibynnol iawn. Yn berson gonest, yn llawn brwdfrydedd. Rydych chi braidd yn ddiamynedd gyda thymer wyllt sydyn, ond mi fyddwch chi'n anghofio'n gyflym a fyddwch chi byth yn dal dig.

Eich bai mwyaf yw eich hunanoldeb, a'r duedd i anghofio ystyried pobl eraill. Mae'n gas gyda chi ufuddhau i eraill gan fod gyda chi farn bendant am bob peth.

ARIES ENWOG:
Ann Clwyd,
Joe Calzaghe
Sion Eirian,
Dafydd Wigley,
Cerys Matthews.

© Suzanne Carpenter

Cinderella sparkles, but offers few surprises…

by GARETH JAMIESON
Follow Screen Talk on Twitter – @GEMScreenTalk

IT seems as if, having exhausted the possibilities of sequels, Hollywood's latest, uncreative attempt to empty cinemagoers' pockets is bringing animated fairytales to life.

Last year's *Maleficent* was a retelling of the Sleeping Beauty story, told from the titular villain's perspective, and while the critical response was mixed, box office success meant that cinemas will likely be heaving with animated characters coming to life.

The latest is *Cinderella*, directed by Kenneth Branagh; it tells the story of Ella (Lily James), who, when her father passes away, find herself at the mercy of her cruel stepmother (played by Cate Blanchett) and her step sisters (Sophie McShera and Holliday Grainger). But when she meets a prince (Richard Madden), her life seems set to change, especially when she's being watched over by a fairy godmother (Helena Bonham Carter)...

As noted in the opening paragraph, it seems a little creatively redundant to remake animation into live-action, cashing in on the goodwill of the original with only a modicum of an upgrade being offered by the filmmakers, and it's a charge that can be levelled at *Cinderella* here.

You shouldn't go into this film expecting the storybook to be ripped up, but while lacking any real surprises, the finished product exudes enough charm and goodwill that you will find yourself pleasantly surprised but not blown away. Giving Kenneth Branagh the director's chair was an idea that is as good on paper as it is in practice; while seemingly 'only' a purveyor of Shakespeare on film, *Thor* showed that Branagh had enough skill and ambition to paint on grander canvasses, and so it goes here.

Visually, the film is sumptuous to look at, a great deal of credit going to legendary production designer Dante Ferretti, who strikes the balance between overly stylish (the palace sets) and worn (Ella's family home), and gives Branagh the perfect tools.

He handles the pace of the story well, and adds that much-required Disney sparkle to proceedings, even if it occasionally threatens to drift towards overt schmaltz, but young or old will savour the beauty of the film's look.

Adapted by Chris Weitz (who, trivia time, co-wrote *American Pie*), the films stays slavishly devoted to its source material; there are a few little tweaks here and there, most notably the lack of any musical numbers which grounds the film, but it's still the nuts, bolts and plenty more besides of the beloved fairytale.

Given how strait-laced and earnest it feels in places, you need a cast who can get past that and prevent the characters from being annoying and across the board the turns are well-executed.

Lily James isn't dealt the best of hands as Ella starts out a little too simpering, but James' performance soon locks into place and she makes for a grounded lead, believable as a princess but, more importantly, believable as a character.

Opposite her, Richard Madden plays the prince shorn of pomposity and, sadly, character; there's not that much for Madden to do other than be dashing and charming, which he does well, but there's little meat for him to get into, and he doesn't feel as intrinsically a part of the narrative as you would want.

The ace card would seemingly be casting Cate Blanchett, and her haughty, ice cold 1950s-esque glamour, as the cruel stepmother.

But while she attempts to get a bit more juice out of the character, she doesn't devour the role and seems a little subdued when a larger performance would have been more fun (see Glenn Close in *101 Dalmatians*), a role that falls to Sophie McShera and Holliday Grainger as the evil stepsisters who attack their roles with relish.

Ultimately, *Cinderella* is something of a 'meh' film; it's hardly essential viewing, but if you do watch it you'll be charmed though not at all surprised.

It's a faithful telling of the fairy tale for the 21st century, but doesn't have the wit or edge to really resonate with the audience – especially when the original, animated film is just a DVD or download away.

VERDICT: A pleasant viewing experience that looks lovely, *Cinderella* doesn't do any more than that. A good cast do a good job, Kenneth Branagh's direction (and Dante Ferretti's production design) give it that magical gloss, but anyone hoping for anything more than you find in the original will be disappointed. *Enjoyable*.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: *101 Dalmatians* (1996), *Maleficent* (2014).

Dyffryn Gardens opens up for free!

ON April 17, Dyffryn Gardens in the Vale is throwing open its doors to visitors for free – as part of RHS National Gardening Week, and to get families outdoors and celebrating spring.

They are joining in with RHS week to celebrate all things horticultural.

Geraldine Donovan, general manager at Dyffryn Gardens, said: "It's a great way to let people who haven't visited us before see what Dyffryn and the National Trust is all about. You can explore our enormous gardens and arboretum, have a go at some crafts inside the mansion and officially wave goodbye to the cold and hello to the spring."

National Gardening Week was launched four years ago by the RHS. This is the first year that Dyffryn will be taking part.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dyffryn-gardens.

Ty Hafan lottery draw winners

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number D872.

● **£2,000:** 576853 .

● **The rollover, which now stands at £7,500 was not won this week.**

● **£10:** 721075, 580471, 193491, 262633, 344528, 419698, 542417, 770441, 987225, 262735, 695240, 993924, 271232, 368395, 704099, 606282, 543272, 880068, 767593, 1798.

● **£5:** 621448, 416725, 307365, 699117, 799231, 814767, 500997, 715301, 421664, 483106, 320633, 545497, 278727, 435279, 249957, 198989, 550553, 897126, 256093, 181778, 487410, 417516, 927315, 278076, 898214, 430112, 570483, 219012, 235284, 963354, 942384, 862640, 750917, 412511, 122048, 868241, 838916, 837939, 788482, 577528, 503250, 108702, 512714, 726151, 943539, 371996, 289753, 100418, 478402, 341868, 461216, 437007, 522700, 767744, 681869, 504886, 232, 840, 487, 1229.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please telephone 029 2053 2300.

Marie Curie Swimathon challenge

SWIMATHON, the world's biggest annual fundraising swim is back for 2015 and swimmers across the country are poised to take to one of the over 600 participating pools and raise vital funds for Marie Curie.

Taking place across the weekend of April 17-19, this year's event is set to be the biggest yet, said Marie Curie community fundraiser, Karen Jones.

She is encouraging residents to put on their swimsuits and head down to their local pool to take on the Swimathon c hallenge.

Swimmers can challenge themselves to the 5k, 2.5k or 1.5k individual or team 5k, or 1.5k swims and raise funds for Marie Curie.

Swimathon entries are open until April 15. Register at Swimathon.org or call 0845 36 700 36.

TEXTILE SHOW IN BRIDGEND

A FREE Threads of Bridgend Textile Exhibition is being held until April 4 from 9.30am – 4pm at Carnegie House, Wyndham Street, Bridgend.

A workshop will be held alongside the exhibition to create embroidery hoop art that will be curated into a display in the town centre.

Out and About at Easter with The GEM

Easter services

Methodist Church Holy Week and Easter services in Barry:

Maundy Thursday (April 2), 10.30am – 12 noon, at Crossway Methodist Church – children's *Frozen* activity with an Easter theme for children aged 5 – 11.

At 7pm, in Saint David's – 'Tenebrae', a service of light and shadows with Holy Communion.

Good Friday, The Gathering Place church and community centre, 10-12 noon, children's *Frozen* activity with Easter theme for children aged 4 – 11.

At 12 noon, the Methodist churches will be joining with 'The Churches of Barry' on the Walk of Witness; 2pm – 3 pm, Saint David's Methodist Church opens for prayer and quiet. 2pm – 3 pm, a joint service of quiet meditation led by The Church in Wales and the Methodist Church, at Tathan Parish Church, Saint Athan.

Easter Day (Sunday, April 5) – 6.30am Sun-Rise Service, by the sea front, Barry Island. Easter Services at Saint David's and Cadoxton – 9.45am; The Gathering Place church and The Waterfront Church, 10.30am, Crossway and Saint John 11am. All services with Holy Communion.

Contact the ministers on 01446 406262, or 01446 678730 for further details.

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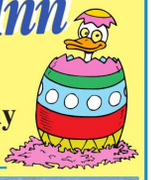

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WHAT'S ON

Barry services

Today, Maundy Thursday the congregations of St Paul's, Merthyr Dyfan and St Cadoc's are joining with St Mary's Holton Road, Barry, at 7pm, to commemorate the Last Supper on the night before Jesus's crucifixion.

On Good Friday, all the churches of Barry lead the Christian 'Walk of Witness', departing from the Parade Gardens at 12 noon with a service on King's Square at 1.30pm. The story of the Passion is told at Merthyr Dyfan Church at 10am and St Paul's at 3.15pm.

On Holy Saturday (April 4) the first Mass of Easter will be held this year at St Cadoc's Church, Cadoxton, at 8pm. Easter Sunday's services to celebrate Easter Day are 8.45am at Merthyr Dyfan Church and 10am at St Paul's Hall.

Another Foodbank

A new Foodbank centre opens in the Ogmore Valley today (Thursday, April 2) at Horeb Chapel, Dinam Terrace, Nantymoel. Opening hours are 11am – 1pm.

Easter egg challenge

COSMESTON and Porthkerry Country Parks will be hosting their annual Easter egg hunts every day this weekend.

All are welcome from tomorrow, April 3 – 6, to find the Easter egg posts and answer 10 questions.

Maps and question sheets can be collected from the visitor centre at Cosmeston, or the golf hut at Porthkerry.

Rangers are hoping to match the success of last year's hunt, which saw over 500 families taking part to win some Easter goodies.

Entry is any time between 10am and 3.30pm and costs £2.50 per person. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information, call Porthkerry on 01446 733589 or Cosmeston on 02920 701678, or email Porthkerry@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk or cosmestonlakes@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk.

YFC county field day

ON Saturday (April 4) Ashdown Fencing will be supporting Glamorgan YFC at the county field day fence erecting competition.

It will be donating and presenting the Ashdown Fencing Ltd perpetual shield.

Richard Taylor (owner and founder of Ashdown) will be judging the competition and also the junior fencing competition.

He will present triumph shields, donated by Ashdown to the winning junior team.

County field day takes place at Amelia Trust Farm, Five Mile Lane. Results and awards for the day will be revealed and presented at The Three Horse Shoes, Moulton.

Acts are confirmed for this year's Food and Drink Festival

THE entertainment line-up for this year's Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival is filling up fast and promises to get the new-look event off with a bang.

Local musicians Emily Langford, Finding Fiona, Lauren England and Seafall Lite are among those who have signed up to entertain the crowds in the food court – just one of the new features in the rejuvenated festival.

Each artist will have dedicated slots to perform throughout the festival, which this year takes place over the Bank Holiday weekend, May 24 – 25.

Classically trained Emily Langford, 21 from Cowbridge, has appeared on Alan Carr's *The Singer Takes It All* on Channel 4, and will be performing a selection of musical theatre and jazz standards. She said: "I think the new format for the festival and opening up the stage for local performers is great and I'm really looking forward to performing."

Seafall Lite, a jazz-tinged acoustic band based in Llantwit Major and Cardiff, and contemporary three piece band Finding Fiona – made up of Sarah Edwards, guitarist Rob Holt and pianist Rob Fry – and solo female vocalist Lauren England, will also perform across the weekend.

With 100 exhibitors, top name demonstrators and the new spring date, the Festival is expecting record breaking visitor numbers giving all the confirmed acts the chance to perform to tens of thousands of people.

Speaking about the new Festival format, Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival Chairman, John Davies, said: "Offering the stage to local performers and giving them the opportunity to reach such a large and varied audience is our way of giving something back to the community and is just one of the many improvements we've made."

There is still availability for local performers wanting to take to the stage at this year's festival.

To find out how you can get involved, contact Festival Manager Polly Wilson on 07875 290428, email info@cowbridgefoodanddrink.org. Full details about the show and the complete line-up can be found on the website www.cowbridgefoodanddrink.org.

Tickets for the festival – which cost £5 per day or £8 for the weekend – can be purchased online for the first time, with a 10 per cent discount on all pre-sale tickets. Children 12 years and under go free.

This year's Cowbridge Food & Drink Festival takes place on May 24 – 25.

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Vale church hosts service for the Lord Lieutenant

Pictures by
HEATHER MARCH

THE Lord Lieutenant of South Glamorgan, Dr Peter Beck and the Lieutenancy, held their annual service at St Andrew's Church, St Andrew's Major.

The sermon was preached by the Rector, Rev Andrew James and prayers were led by the Chaplain to the Lieutenancy, Rev Canon Stewart Lisk.

A reception followed at Garnhill House by kind invitation of Mrs Cicily Green and family.

Mr Colin and Mrs Jones of Barry.

Lieutenant Colonel Sam Smith (in uniform) of Llanbetherie with Mr Ian Colston and Mr and Mrs Colin Jenkins of Llantwit Major.

Dr Ian Campell of Penarth, Mr Chris Brain of Peterston-super-Ely and the High Sheriff of South Glamorgan, Mr David Jenkins of Barry.

Commander Peter Machin and Mrs Machin (Radyr).

Colonel Kevin Davies of Cowbridge with retired Lord Lieutenant Captain Sir Norman Lloyd-Edwards and Mr Barrie Davies of Barry.

Lord Lieutenant Dr Peter Beck and Mrs Beck arrive at the church.

Bowls open day

THE chairman and committee members at Rhoose Bowling Club are looking forward to an exciting year at the club in Celtic Way.

To start off their 25th anniversary events an open day will be held on Saturday, April 11, from 2pm to 5pm.

A number of coaches will be on hand ready to help anyone interested in learning to play the wonderfully relaxing game of bowls.

The club will provide the bowls so all you need is a flat pair of shoes. Families are especially invited as this is a sport for all ages.

JH

NATURE RESERVE WINS £375 GRANT

CWMTALWG Local Nature Reserve, Barry has been awarded a £375 grant, thanks to a scheme by Keep Wales Tidy and Tesco.

Volunteers were "thrilled" to hear they'd been successful in applying for the All Wales Grant which they will use to improve the paths in the reserve

Community groups, schools and charitable organisations across Wales were asked to apply to the All Wales Grant Scheme from November 2014, with grants of £100 – £500 available to help them with their very own green initiatives.

Anne Bryan from The Cwmtalwg Woodlands Residents Group said: "The group are very pleased to have this grant from Keep Wales Tidy which will pay for materials to improve the paths in this small green oasis on the edge of Barry. We would like more volunteers to help with the work, and any individuals or organisations who are interested in volunteering will be very welcome."

More information on the project can be found at www.cwmtalwgwoods.co.uk.

WHAT A WHOPPER!

TONY JAMES, a local postman from Barry, caught this 5lb haddock in Porthkerry Bay from his own boat Bluefin on March 10. The fish, which more than doubles the current Welsh boat record of 2lb 3oz caught off Swansea in 1996, is an extremely rare catch for the channel and is the first one Tony has caught, or seen, in 35 years fishing this area.

MPN's best in Wales for the fourth time!

Included in the picture with snooker star, Steve Davis, are Melanie and Paul Webster,.

LOCAL home improvement company, MPN Windows, has once again been named 'best in Wales' for customer satisfaction, meaning the family-run company has now collected this award an impressive four times!

MPN's trophy comes from the independent window installers' organisation Network VEKA, a unique, sectoral standards organisation that only accepts the very best, most professional window and door companies, and then makes sure they stay the best.

All prospective members undergo rigorous vetting before being accepted and must agree to regular audits and training. In this way, Network VEKA can be so confident in the quality of its members' work that every one is able to offer the organisation's ten year insurance-backed guarantee.

The results are calculated from the customer satisfaction feedback of nearly 16,000 households across Britain and Ireland: every customer of every member company for the whole year.

The trophy was presented at Network VEKA's AGM in Stratford-upon-Avon, by the organisation's brand ambassador, Steve Davis.

The six times world snooker champion told the MPN team: "As a Network VEKA member, you are competing against the best of the best – so to win 'best in Wales' for a fourth time really is a fantastic achievement.

"Your customers obviously appreciate all your hard work," he added."

Carpenter Sian achieves a dream on building site

THE former Vale Magistrates Court at Barry has transformed carpenter Sian Bridge's life through her involvement with the Newydd Housing redevelopment project.

This time last year, she was a trainee carpenter, desperate for an opportunity to get a foot in the door in a traditionally male-dominated industry.

However, following a week's placement on site with contractor Jehu Project Services Limited, where she worked alongside carpenters from local sub contractor Jones and Ryle,

Sian's commitment and hard work was rewarded with a part time job, that later turned into full time employment.

Throughout the year of the project, Sian was not only able to build on her training and continue her qualifications, but she also became sought after as a role model for girls considering the industry as a career.

She participated in an 'interview the site staff' session with St Helens Primary School pupils, and planned and delivered a carpentry workshop session on site for local women.

Formerly based in Cardiff, Sian has now moved to live with her family in Barry.

Jehu Project Services site manager Nyron Wood, who oversaw the construction of the development, handed over a gift of equipment to support Sian in her future career.

Bernie Mark, Jehu's corporate social responsibility and training coordinator, said: "Sian was offered a work experience placement and really made the most of the opportunity.

"She has demonstrated that it is possible for women to work successfully in the male-dominated field of construction trades, a positive message, both for women interested in a similar career, and an encouragement to other employers to consider female applicants."

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High Sheriff honours pillars of community – as she looks back at a busy year in office

ABOVE: High Sheriff Elizabeth Singer with her husband Andrew.

Photos by MANDY THOMAS
Available for purchase,
telephone 07541 982794.

THE outgoing High Sheriff of Mid Glamorgan, Mrs Elizabeth Singer, held an awards ceremony at the Y Centre in Porthcawl recently, to recognise some of the organisations and individuals whose work in the community she has admired during her year of office.

One of the organisations to receive a certificate was the Tonyrefail Boxing Club, which was set up by PCSO Alan Blackburn and retired PC Gary Davies in an area with a high crime rate.

The objective was to allow young people to channel their energies into a physical sport which would also teach them about discipline.

The club has 80 girls and boys aged six to 60 who attend regularly. PCSO Alan Blackburn was a professional boxer and he, together with Gary Davies, founded the club in 2011.

Mrs Singer attended the club in February and praised the work they do for the people of Tonyrafail.

The same goes for Girl Guiding in Porthcawl which was represented by Helen Murdoch.

The After School Club in the Y Centre in Porthcawl provides a useful support for families.

The South Wales Police and the South Wales Fire and Rescue service were recognised for the work they do, over and beyond what is required of them, for young people in the community.

The Porthcawl Museum and Historical Society received an award for the work that they do in organising displays, and a First World War exhibition.

The Porthcawl Lifeboat Station, St John Ambulance and Sandville Self Help Centre were recognised for their contributions.

A former mayor of RCT, Sylvia Jones, was honoured for her work in establishing the John Hopla Memorial in the Rhondda Heritage Centre and her persistence in arranging a transfer of the plaque from obscurity.

The borough mayors of Bridgend, Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taf were honoured for the work they do in their boroughs, and likewise the Mayor of Porthcawl.

Liz presented a certificate to Lorraine Stone who made her court dress, and she told Lorraine and the other awardees how she regularly encountered amazing stories of service to the community which always went over and above what was expected of them.

Coun Sylvia Jones said she was sure she was speaking for everyone when she said how much she appreciated Liz's support for the community.

ABOVE: Chief Constable Peter Vaughan represented South Wales Police.

Chief Fire Officer Huw Jakeway of South Wales Fire and Rescue.

Lorraine Stone, who made the High Sheriff's court dress.

The Mayor of Porthcawl, Coun Sean Aspey.

John Abrahams represented the Porthcawl RNLI.

ABOVE: Coun Sylvia Jones received an certificate.

ABOVE: Helen Murdoch represented Girl Guiding in the area.

Brian Freeman and Nicky Rundle, of the PorthcawlY Centre after-school club.

ABOVE: Beverley Smithen represented the St John Ambulance.

Paul and Ceri Joseph from Porthcawl Museum, with their certificate.

Mrs Kay Jenkins, the Mayoress of Bridgend county borough.

YOUR CHANCE TO SHARE THE COMMUNITY NEWS...

Welsh night

IT was unfortunate that, through unforeseen circumstances, I missed this evening of entertainment at Cefn Cribwr Community Centre (Green Hall) and thank Jill for the information.

The evening was a resounding success. The stage was decorated with Welsh flags and the tables with daffodils. However, it was the Welsh flag which covered the whole of the back wall of the hall which caught everyone's attention (purported to have 'flown off' a certain tall building in Cardiff)!!!

The audience of approximately 100 people enjoyed an evening of Welsh-themed variety. It began with a piano recital by Louise from year-11 and singing by year-9 pupils of the Chamber Group from Cynffig Comprehensive School, then a play by pupils from Cefn Cribwr Primary School, with Daisy Young as Granny who had the audience roaring with laughter.

Then came Dennis Lang, an award-winning Welsh comedian.

During the interlude, a raffle raised over £150 (prizes had been generously donated by local businesses). A donation will be presented to the Wales Air Ambulance charity.

The second half opened with a harp recital by Ann Clarke, Michaela Roberts-Parrish and their music teacher Angharad Edwards.

The next performance was by Dawnsyr Gwerin Pen-y-fai, fresh from their participation at the Porthcawl Celtic Folk Festival.

The evening concluded with a magical performance by Maesteg-based women's choir, Harmony, accompanied by the musical director and accompanist, Wendy Murphy.

The organisers, Martin Goudge and Diana Dimond would like to thank the volunteers who made the night such a success, namely, Billy Evans, Dai 'Social', Eirwen Coombes, the Dimond Family and not forgetting the Castle Players' tech team, Mark and Carl.

Easter parade

CHILDREN can start making their bonnets and decorating their eggs for the Cefn Cribwr Easter bonnet parade and competition at the Community Centre (Green Hall) this Saturday, April 4 at 10am.

Organised by Cefn Cribwr Gardening Club, the event is open to all.

For more information email Veronica Davies, *vonandpete@hotmail.com*; or Tracy Birch, *alanandtracybirch139@hotmail.co.uk*; or telephone (01656) 743410.

Pen-y-fai WI

PRESIDENT Jean Griffiths opened the Pen-y-Fai WI meeting and welcomed members, then Mavis Heck, the minute secretary, read out the minutes.

Christine Phillips, the secretary, informed members of future events, including a lunch and fashion show at the Norton House Hotel, Gower, in April running over a period of eight days.

The Glamorgan Federation annual council meeting is taking place at Princess Royal Theatre, Port Talbot on May 6; Singing For Fun at the Neath Port Talbot College, Neath from 10am till 4pm on Saturday, May 30; WI centenary garden party in Margam Orangery on July 8; and a royal garden party in Buckingham Palace on June 2.

Christine discussed plans for the 30th anniversary party on Saturday, May 9, in the school hall at 2.30pm.

The speaker, Maria Berrow's subject for the evening was Pearls. Maria is employed by Dewi Griffiths Jewellers and she brought a display of necklaces etc.

She gave each member an A4 sheet of paper on which there was a quiz consisting of 15 questions. The prize, a pearl bracelet, was won by Gwen Davies.

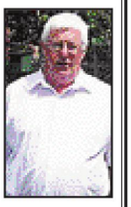
The annual meeting will be on Monday, April 20 at 7.30pm in Pen-y-fai CE Primary School hall.

Congratulations to Jan Corns, who will be celebrating her 75th birthday on Good Friday April 3, and wishing her many more years of health and goodwill.

NORTH BRIDGEND NEWS

A message for all readers in the north of Bridgend who would like to have items included in the community news columns of The GEM:
If you wish to submit reports on any social activity in this region, please contact me.
I am very approachable and will endeavour to include every newsworthy subject.

Contact details: CLIVE MITCHELL
1 Tyn-Y-Coed Close, Sarn, Bridgend CF32 9NQ
TEL: 01656 725399
email: tynycoed1@yahoo.co.uk



Easter services

ST John's Church, Aberkenfig, Maundy Thursday, April 2 at 7pm (washing of feet and stripping of the altar). April 5 Easter Sunday – Sung Eucharist at 9am.

St Bride's church, Llansantffraid – Good Friday service April 3 at 10am, 11.15 am hot cross buns and children's service. 12pm to 1.45pm Watching with Christ on the cross. April 5 Easter Sunday – Holy Eucharist at 10am, Sung Eucharist at 10.30am.

The Square, Aberkenfig Good Friday April 3 –Act of worship and witness 2pm to 3pm.

St David's Church, Betws April 5 Easter Sunday – Family service with Eucharist 10am.

St David's Church, Pontycymer Good Friday Devotions – April 3 at 7pm. April 5 Easter Sunday – Holy Eucharist with hymns 10am.

St David's Church, Wyndham Saturday, April 4 – Service of light at 7pm. April 5 Easter Sunday – Sung Eucharist 10.30am, Evensong 5pm.

St Tyfodwg's Church, Glynogwr April 5 Easter Sunday – Holy Eucharist with hymns 9am.

St Cien's Church, Llangeinor April 5 Easter Sunday – Holy Eucharist with hymns 11.15am.

St Theodore's Church, Kenfig Hill Maundy Thursday April 2pm – 7pm Mass of the Last Supper. Good Friday April 3, 10am – Walk of Witness to Pyle beginning at Heathbridge House Medical Practice; 2pm – Liturgy of the Cross @ St Theodore's. Holy Saturday April 4, 7.30pm – Easter Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter. Easter Sunday April 5, 10am – Sung Eucharist and Blessing of Easter Garden; 6pm – Sung Eucharist.

Maesteg competition

I ATTENDED the Dunraven Windows 'Young Welsh Singer of the Year' competition at Maesteg Town Hall organised by the Maesteg Gleemen male voice choir last Saturday evening.

The adjudicators were Rebecca Evans, international opera star, Grant Llewellyn, musical director of the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra and Callum Thompson, producer of digital and learning at the BBC's National Orchestra of Wales.

The accompanists were Sian Davies, daughter of the renowned and recently deceased pianist Bryan Davies; Suzanne Hodges, accompanist for the Maesteg Gleemen; Ryan Wood, accompanist for Côr Meibion Maesteg a'r Cylch male choir; and Aleksandra Myslek from Warsaw, accompanist for one of the competitors, Lukasz Karauda.

The competitors are divided into three sections – 11 to 14 years; 15 to 18 years; and 19 to 28 years.

The three competitors in the first section were Tessa Castenera-Webber, St Clare's School, Porthcawl; Matthew Daly, Bryntirion Comprehensive School, Bridgend; Layla Miller, Porthcawl Comprehensive School.

The winner was Tessa Castenera-Webber with her traditional renditions of 'Myfanwy' and 'Gypsy Fiddles Playing'.

The three competitors in the second section were Lauren Coates, Bryntirion Comprehensive School, Bridgend; Lucy Vinen, Porthcawl Comprehensive School; Anwen-Angharad Dixon, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd.

The winner was Anwen-Angharad Dixon with a song from Brahms 'I'r Eos' (An Die Nachtigall) and 'The girl from 14G' by Jeanine Tesori.

The winners of the these two groups received the Bryan Davies trophy and a prize to the value of £500.

The runners-up in each category received a personal prize of £50 and a voucher for £50.

There were five competitors in the final section, they were Angharad Lyddon – mezzo, Royal Academy Opera; Huw Montagu Rendall – baritone, Royal College of Music; Andrew Henley – tenor, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama; Eirlys Myfanwy Davies – mezzo soprano, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland; Lukaz Karauda – baritone, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

The winner was Huw Montague Rendall with Mozart's 'Hai Gia vinta la causa' from *Le Nozzo de Figaro*; Gounod's 'Avant de quitter ces lieux' from *Faust*; Strauss's 'Nachtgang'; and Warlock's 'Yarmouth Fair'.

The winner received £2,500 and a perpetual trophy. Each runner-up received £500.

The compère for the evening was BBC presenter Beverley Humphreys.

The Maesteg Gleemen male voice choir, under musical director Alun Hodges, provided the entertainment while the adjudicators pondered over their difficult task.

Adjudicators were full of praise for each individual competitor, and stated that they had witnessed world class performances.

Rebecca Evans also offered each of the competitors in sections one and two a masterclass session.

The prizes were presented by Coun Gary Thomas, Mayor of Bridgend CBC, Sian Davies, Suzanne Hodges and Alun Hodges.

CALLING OLD BOYS: REUNION HOPES TO EXCEED 150 MARK!

by GEM REPORTER

NOSTALGIA will be the order of the day when the Romilly Old Boys' Reunion takes place at Cadoxton Conservative Club, Barry.

The last reunion in 2013 was very well attended and featured in The GEM. One of the organisers, Alan Kingdon, explained that its success was the reason for another get-together on Friday, April 17 (7pm 'til late).

"We had 150 old boys at the reunion in 2013 and when I've bumped into the lads since, they've said: 'When are we going to have another one?'

"We've already sold 100 tickets and I'm hoping we could top the 150 people who attended last time.

"Many of those coming will be local, but we've also had interest from as far afield as west Wales, Brecon, Northampton, London – even France, though it may be a bit too far for him to come. Four members of staff will be there too.

"An evening like this is nostalgic and it's great that people make the effort to come from near and far."

Romilly Boys' School opened in 1906 and closed its doors in 1966.

One of the reasons that Alan is confident organisers can exceed the 150 people who turned up in 2013 is the fact that those who missed out let him know!

"They said if they'd realised it was on they'd have come too."

It will be a great opportunity for people to reminisce with old friends and catch up on the latest news.

Alan said old boys will have name tags just to help jog memories.

Free tickets are available from Vic Hopkins (butchers) High Street, Barry; or contact Alan Kingdon on 01446 732203; or Clive Tapscott on 01446 743157.

A £1 donation is requested on the door to cover organising expenses.

If anyone wants to know the latest on Romilly Old Boys, they should go to: www.romillyoldboysofficialsite.com; for more information or to leave contact details for organisers, email: romillyoldboys@gmail.com.

Scarweather mast will be removed

REGIONAL AM Suzy Davies says she has won her fight to get a rusting mast removed from the seabed off Porthcawl.

The Met Mast, which was installed to check wind speeds as part of the abortive application to establish the Scarweather Sands Wind Farm, is to be removed at last following a campaign by the Welsh Conservative AM.

The mast, which is 250 feet high, is to be removed by its owners Eon and Dong Energy. Mrs Davies has been lobbying Natural Resources Wales, the Welsh Government and the Crown Estates over this matter.

She has now been told that the owners of the mast have applied for a Marine Licence to remove it.

Suzy Davies said: "I am pleased at this latest news. It has taken a year of lobbying and campaigning to reach this stage but I was afraid that the owners would just walk away, leaving the taxpayers to pick up the bill in the future for the removal of the mast.

"It was pile driven into the seabed in 2003 to monitor wind speeds but in 2009, the wind farm plan was abandoned, leaving the mast in situ. It should have been removed as soon as it stopped monitoring wind speeds, in accordance with the licence that was granted to permit its installation.

"I have been pressing the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales to take enforcement action to get it removed. There should be no question of there being any cost to the public purse and the people of Porthcawl should not have had to put up with having this rusting structure off the coastline for a minute longer than necessary."

Question Time at Nolton church

THE parish of Coity, Nolton and Brackla with Coychurch, in association with Bridgend Churches Together and Gweini, will be hosting an election hustings event at the church of St Mary, Nolton (Merthyr Mawr Road North, Bridgend CF31 3NH) on Wednesday, April 22 at 7pm.

Parliamentary candidates for the Bridgend constituency have been invited to attend Question Time, with questions submitted by the audience as they arrive. So far, four candidates have confirmed their attendance.

Rector of the parish, Canon Michael Komor, said: "We are excited about this event, which we anticipate will involve most of the main political parties' candidates.

"We believe the community should embrace the opportunity to meet their prospective representatives and relay their sentiments and concerns.

"We look forward to welcoming people from all over the community to the church for this event."

Sun seekers study eclipse!

LLANCARFAN Primary School's 'Super Scientific Sun Seekers' safely ventured out to observe the solar eclipse with the school staff.

Sieves were gathered, holes made in card and some well-conceived devices were created to view this momentous event safely.

Children also observed live web feeds and took part in an assembly to understand the spectacular phenomenon they had just witnessed!

Rhoose Lifeguards news

COMPETITORS from Rhoose Lifeguard Club recently headed to the Royal Life Saving Society's (RLSS UK) most prestigious sporting event – the National Speed Championships 2015 held the London Aquatic Centre, the venue of the London Olympics.

The team joined some of the UK's leaders in lifesaving sport and members from GB and Northern Ireland teams to fight it out for the title of 'national champion' in a number of the competition events.

Each year more than 500 athletes are pushed to the limits in events including Super Lifesaver, Manikin Carry and Line Throw, to name a few.

Team manager, Simon Perry, said: "This is the highlight of the sporting calendar for us and we had been training tirelessly in preparation for the event.

"We are extremely proud of our team and how well they competed against clubs from across the country in what was a highly competitive but thoroughly enjoyable weekend."

Some notable performances were put in by all but namely Finn who managed to achieve personal best times in most of his races and come 14th out of 92 competitors in a very exciting 100 metre manikin tow.

The girls relay team put in an amazing last race and narrowly missed out on a podium position by seven seconds. Dom, competing in the Masters category, came away with an impressive three bronze medals in the individual events.

The whole team were also lucky enough to meet and have a photo with Olympian Mark Foster and ask him for some top training tips.

Shortly after the London championships the club put on a Red Nose Day fun evening for the Nipper team members. With a much more relaxed evening than the usual Friday training sessions the children enjoyed some fun races and relays while wearing their red noses.

There was also a cake sale with £90 being raised for Comic Relief. Well done and thank you to all for their cake donations!

We'll be reporting again soon from the GB Championships which take place over the coming month.

JF

Bridge results

RESULTS for the Vale of Glamorgan Bridge club for March 30:

1st Tony Ratcliff & Trish Tracy 73.01%, 2nd John Beard & Liam Sheridan 63.63%, 3rd Alan Lewis & Terry Evans 65.36%.

LE

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www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/aspire2own

VALE of GLAMORGAN
BRO MORGANNWG

Plenty of top action at Sully finals

SULLY Bowls held its finals over the weekend and what a successful two days it proved to be, with both ladies and men jointly sharing the green to produce an incredible standard of bowling.

There was the finals of five ladies competitions to be decided and seven men's; June Best competing in five finals along with Graham Cogbill making five of the men's.

Also, Martin Clarke and Matthew Woodcock each played in four finals and, along with Best and Cogbill, did extremely well to play some excellent bowls while obviously feeling the effects of all their games.

The Saturday morning session saw three competitions decided, with the ladies 'selected rinks' won by the four of C Bland/M Newman/C Willmot/J Best winning 26-16, followed by the junior final which went to 15-year-old Joe Cole who bowled well to beat Steve McKernan 21-10.

The last game of the morning was the men's triples between G Cogbill/M Clarke/M Woodcock and D Parker/R Greenslade/J Greenslade, with Woodcock's triple taking the title easily 22-6.

Saturday afternoon once again saw three games – ladies triples, men's over-60s pairs and the men's championship.

The ladies triples was won by Sandra Romans/Carol Willmot/June Best, while the championship went to Martin Clarke for the second consecutive year after Jason Greenslade conceded, but the game of the afternoon was the over-60s pairs between Brian Foscolo/Graham Cogbill and Dave Curtis/Brian Griffiths.

The game played over 21 ends was neck and neck virtually all the way but by the end of the 18th end it was last year's winners of Cogbill/Foscolo who were ahead by four shots.

The next end went to their opposition when they picked up a two; this was followed by a three to Curtis/Griffiths after Foscolo was a shade unlucky when playing a weighted shot into the head when one down.

He hit the target bowl but took his own bowls out leaving Curtis/Griffiths with a three giving them a one lead playing the last end, and they managed to hold on making two shots to take the title 18 -15.

The Sunday morning session consisted of two 'fours games', the ladies 'drawn rinks' and the men's 'open rinks'. The drawn rinks was won easily by the four of Jean Rogers/Tina Johnson/Jo Hopkins/June Best 27-9 and the men's rinks went to the four of Graham Cogbill/Andrew Morgan/Martin Clarke/Matthew Woodcock, who beat John Best/Ian Paterson/Carl Best/Brian Griffiths by 17-10.

Special mention must go to late substitute Andrew Morgan who, being a relatively new bowler, acquitted himself very well in good company.

Sunday afternoon involved three singles finals and the men's pairs. The Mgt. Osbourne Cup for novices was won by Sue Dance who beat Pat Cogbill 21-13.

The ladies championship was a close fought affair with the score at 12-12 after 15 ends before June Best took seven shots on the next four ends to pull away before closing the game out taking a two on the last end to win 21-14.

The men's senior singles went to Graham Cogbill who bowled very well in beating Fred Phillips 21-7, the men's pairs was a one-sided affair with Clarke/Woodcock beating Cogbill and Dick Cowling.

Due to Sue Britton playing in the Welsh triples the ladies pairs was played a week early with Britton partnered by Lynn Bowen beating Norma Goodrich and June Best 29-18.

Sue Britton joined Lynda and Emma Woodcock in the Welsh triples, who bowled excellently to reach the national final, failing to win by just four shots.

FP

THE BARRY DARTS LEAGUE ROUND-UP

IN the fixtures on March 2, the Cwm Talwg strengthened their grip on the top of the league with a 19-2 win over the Tynewydd.

Richie Boucher and Steve Moggeridge both hit 180s in the match, and Gareth Owens hit a 118 out shot.

With the Poachers not playing, the Billy Ghosts remained in second despite a 7-14 defeat to the Dockers.

The Plastics won 13-8 away to the Raiders, with Mathew Bills hitting a 180 on the night.

The Mariners had a convincing 19-2 away win over the Hell Raisers to take them into fourth place, while the Park Weasels overcame the Runways by 12-9 and the BFC Allsorts won 13-8 at home to the Wanderers.

This week saw the Poachers move into joint second place with a comprehensive 16-5 win away to the Mariners. The Billy Ghosts are level on points in second, after beating the Tynewydd 12-9.

The BFC Allsorts had a comfortable 14-7 away win over the Loungers, while the Park Weasels also obtained a 14-7 away win over the Wanderers.

The Dockers were home to the Raiders in the closest match of the week. The Dockers just came out on top with a 11-10 victory, Mathew Jackson hitting a 180 in the process.

The Plastics completed the weeks fixtures with a 19-2 home win over the Hell Raisers.

With league cup ties taking place this week, teams not involved in the cup are encouraged to play any rearranged games possible.

RL

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Sports under-15s bow out of Ospreys Cup

BRIDGEND Sports bowed out of the Ospreys Cup at the semi-final stage after a 29-10 defeat in tricky conditions to Bryncethin.

The Sports were under no illusions about how difficult this match was going to be as Bryncethin had won all five of their Ospreys Cup games prior to this fixture.

The Sports were quickly out of the blocks and made a positive start to the game which gave the hosts plenty to think about.

It did not take long for the Sports to open the scoring through winger Isaac Morris. Isaac showed good initiative to grubber kick the ball into the try line which he then chased down to give the Sports an early but encouraging five point lead.

Unfortunately for the Sports, Bryncethin reacted strongly to this try and soon had some territory of their own. Bryncethin were clearly potent in attack and with the Sports failing to clear their lines it was only a matter of time before one of the Bryncethin players forced himself over in the corner, despite a battling Sports defence trying their best to deny the try.

With the scores now level, it was all to play for once again. But with Bryncethin now increasing in confidence, it was the home side who grasped control of this important match. After a succession of penalties against the Sports on their own 22 metre line, Bryncethin soon capitalised by passing the ball to their winger who was in acres of space to score.

With Bryncethin now in front, the Sports struggled to respond as the conditions got the better of them and Bryncethin soon extended their lead to 12 points when one of their backs made a break through several Sports defenders to then play in their scrum half, who finished off the move he started by scoring to the right of the posts.

It was now crucial for the Sports to score the next try to halt a confident Bryncethin side in their tracks and on the stroke of halftime, Sports number 8 Calum Reape was played the crash ball from a penalty and charged over the line to give the Sports some hope of regaining the lead by going into halftime trailing by just seven points.

The Sports now required a near flawless half of rugby in order to reach the final. The next try was crucial because the Sports were now in touching distance of making it a level game again thanks to that late first half try, but Bryncnethin soon took some big strides towards winning the match by scoring a vital try in the corner to lead 22-10.

The Sports were now really struggling to create many opportunities and the conditions certainly didn't help matters as it made them lacklustre in attack.

The Sports' fate was sealed in the final play of the game when Bryncethin made the most of a Sports defensive mistake to score a converted try just to the side of the posts.

Overall, Bryncethin were very organised upfront and reduced the Sports opportunities in this half to near nothing, therefore Bryncethin reached the final.

The Sports showed good effort in a match that was always going to be difficult but sadly it just wasn't to be. Nonetheless the Sports should be praised for qualifying out of their group and for reaching the last four of the Bowl!

TP

VIFC EARN WIN IN GLOOMY CLASH

GOALS from Jordan Mortimore, Nicky Cox and Courtney Goodwin saw VIFC win all three points in terrible windy conditions at Barry Sports Centre against Glenbrook.

After the cup heroics of the last two weeks, the Division One frontrunners returned to league action. The VI's booked a league cup final for a second consecutive season and a first appearance in the Barry Cup final but now it was time to focus on the league and a final push for promotion and possible league championship.

In addition to last weekend's semi-final win, the boost of league rivals Wenvoe slipping up had now blown the title race wide open in these final few weeks.

Bill Laing's side headed to BSC to face Glenbrook who were knocked out of the Supporters' Cup semi-finals on penalties last week. Conditions were far from ideal with howling wind and a soggy pitch.

VI started the brighter and Reece Lewis' free kick was tapped in by captain and leading scorer Jordan Mortimore, the striker notching his 51st goal of the season, an unbelievable return.

Both teams struggled with the wind but VI quickly doubled their lead as Lewis was once again provider as his free kick from the left was nodded in by centre half Nicky Cox.

The wind was spoiling the game as both sides toiled to overcome the conditions. VI were handed a slice of good fortune for their third goal. Cox's long throw into the box, flicked on by Mortimore, saw Courtney Goodwin get up to loop a header goalwards and the home keeper slipped as the ball nestled in the top corner.

The second period saw the teams turn around and Glenbrook play with the wind.

VI stopper Paul Lucas expected a barrage of long balls and strikes from distance. Each one Lucas dealt with expertly as the home side put the league leaders under pressure.

Glenbrook did pull one back eventually as a free kick from the left was whipped in and the slightest of touches saw the ball into the net.

The division leaders attempted to step up their game but the wind was now hampering both sides and the quality of the fixture.

Chances were few and far between and Mortimore and Aaron Rogers saw efforts go narrowly wide before Cox sidestepped two players and struck inches past the post from distance. Richie Humphreys then headed against the bar from close range as the away side couldn't quite finish the game off.

The final whistle came as a relief to both sides in the end as fighting against the weather took it's toll.

Team: P.Lucas, J.Robinson, N.Cox, R.Humphreys, R.Lewis, J.Laing, T.Charles, D.Cleave, C.Goodwin, A.Rogers, J.Mortimore. Substitutes: R.West, D.Garrison, L.Lewis, J.Austin.

All three points keep the VI's eight points clear at the top of the league. Second place Wenvoe have two games in hand and will be buoyed by their huge win over FC Pumas, beating them 10-1.

HD

Sports under-9s maintain good form

BRIDGEND Sports under-9s are hitting a great run of form as the last month of the season approaches.

The players are all contributing in both attack and defence which has been clearly demonstrated in their last two games, with a 6-15 away victory over Beddau followed by success over Pencoed on a cold, wet and windy Sunday morning.

The teams played three 10 minute periods. Pencoed won the toss and made their intention clear from the start as in the first play they brought in their bigger players to take the ball up into the Sports' half.

The Sports had other ideas however and soon brought the attack to a halt with tackles that stopped the home team in their tracks, followed up by driving play that drove them back.

The pressure told and the ball was soon turned over and the home team's initial possession advantage lost.

Having turned over possession the Sports attacked with skill, pace and power that soon had the opposition conceding their first try as Dylan Morgan cut his way through the home side's defensive line.

Tries followed for Callum Lewis and Cian John for the Sports as each Pencoed restart was met by a solid wall of Sports tacklers that placed relentless pressure on the opposition.

In the second period, with the ball in hand from the start, Bridgend Sports now showed their attacking intent with Iestyn John setting off on a blistering run from the off. He was stopped just short of the line but good support play saw Thomas Coles on hand to crash over the line for the first score of the period.

Pencoed showed greater determination from the restart which was met by an equally determined effort from the away side as their defence ground each Pencoed attack down with Ben King, Callum Lewis, Dewi Worrall, Dylan Morgan, Iestyn John, Joel Rogers, Thomas Coles and Tyron Davies all in on the action for the Sports.

Tyron Davies was next on the score sheet for Bridgend Sports as he benefitted from a Ben King run. King used his power on a number of occasions to drive holes in the home defence.

This try was followed by one from Joel Rogers, who epitomised the team effort as one attack appeared to breakdown; he gathered the ball off the ground then switched the direction of attack, accelerated and used his pace to outsprint the home defence to score near the corner.

With Bridgend Sports taking a commanding 6-0 lead going into the final period, many a side would have bowed to the pressure but the Pencoed youngsters showed great character.

But, as hard as they tried they could not penetrate a solid line of tacklers from Bridgend Sports, who were putting in an inspirational performance.

Alex Stimpson, Ben King, Callum Lewis, Cian John, Dewi Worrall, Dylan Morgan, Iestyn John, Ieuan Pilliner, Joel Rogers, Thomas Chick Thomas Coles and Tyron Davies closed the opposition down with resolute tackling.

This effort combined with elusive running from Callum Lewis, the pace of players Cian John and Joel Rogers, backed up with the ever-present Dylan Morgan, saw Tyron Davies claim two further tries for Bridgend Sports to run out 8-0 winners.

It was an outstanding team performance for Bridgend Sports with every squad member contributing to secure the victory in a game played in cold, blustery and at times wet conditions.

Squad: Alex Stimpson, Ben King, Callum Lewis, Cian John, Dewi Worrall, Dylan Morgan, Iestyn John, Ieuan Pilliner, Joel Rogers, Thomas Chick, Thomas Coles, and Tyron Davies.

SP

Evan lands a one-two!

THERE were only four starters for the Truvape Handicap Chase at Chepstow Racecourse on Monday, and two of the four were trained at Llancarfan by Evan Williams.

The two trained by the Welsh wizard were Sublime Talent and Zama Zama and, as it happened, they finished first and second in that order.

Stable jockey Paul Moloney rode the winner which beat its stable companion by two and a quarter lengths at odds of 3-1.

BRIAN LEE

HISTORIC 'FIXTURE' DIDN'T TAKE PLACE

The School of Hard Knocks dishes one out to Barry RFC

MEMBERS of Barry Rugby Football Club were left "gutted" after Sky Sports' School of Hard Knocks dropped them from a fixture at Cardiff Arms Park with just two days to go, *writes TIM CHAPMAN*.

The match was due to take place on Tuesday, March 24 at 7pm and a number of people from Barry had made plans to attend, including family members of the players.

The ethos behind the School of Hard Knocks team is to give youngsters from the 'wrong side of the tracks' a new chance in life, learning discipline and teamwork through rugby, and delivering work opportunities at the end of the two-month period.

The team is coached by former Welsh international Scott Quinnell and England World Cup winner Will Greenwood.

Barry RFC committee man William Knapman, who helped to organise the fixture, voiced the disappointment of those who were looking forward to seeing the club's players performing on one of rugby's most iconic stages.

"On the Sunday we were told by Sky that the offer was being rescinded because, according to them, our side was too strong.

"We were prepared to re-jig the side and do whatever we could to keep the fixture on. They didn't even have the decency to respond.

"People were gutted – it was a massive disappointment. It's not every day that you get the chance to play on the Cardiff Arms Park pitch.

"Families, club members and the junior sections were going along."

Some club members suspect that Sky decided that it wanted a more prestigious fixture against Cardiff High School Old Boys.

At the time of going to press, The GEM had not received a response from Sky TV.

All square for Mules

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 48

The second half started pretty much like the first with Tonmawr having most of the possession, but they were unable to capitalize due to handling errors and brave Kenfig tackling. Tonmawr then opted to kick over the defence, which fell straight into the hands of Kyle Oram, who needed no invitation to go on one of his many runs only to be stopped by a crunching tackle taking him into touch.

From the resulting lineout the Kenfig forwards took control and gained ground, through several pick and drives, and good communication between Luke Griffiths and Connor Tantum resulted in a perfectly executed box kick over the defence.

Luke Griffiths showed great strength and handling to pluck the ball out of the air under pressure from the covering defence to score his and Kenfig's second try of the game. Connor Tantum added the two extra points, taking the score to 17-0 with 15 minutes to play

Tonmawr had the benefit of a big bench, and this, together with injuries to Cameron Rees, Kyle Oram and Luke Grifiths, proved to be the turning point in the game.

From a 22 drop out Kenfig opted to kick short but Tonmawr were able to gather and run back to score an unconverted try from one of their replacements; this got Tonmawr's tails up and again the replacements worked together to score another unconverted try out wide.

Kenfig worked tirelessly in defence but credit to Tonmawr for not giving up and with the final play of the game scored a try under the sticks which was easily converted to end the game 17-17.

The coaches decided to award Jonny Clatworthy with man of the match for his tireless tackling, but a few other boys also deserve a mention - Lewis Rees for constantly pressurising forcing many handling errors by Tonmawr, Kyle Oram who was always a threat with ball in hand, Cameron Rees who also put in several great tackles and Luke Griffiths for his game management in constantly shouting orders and ensuring the game was played in the correct areas.

DHD

Bridgend Bridge Club news

PLEASE note that there will be no club session on Good Friday, April 3.

The results for recent events are:

Wednesday, March 25: 1st Marjorie Morris and Bill Turner, 2nd John Beard and Liam Sheridan, 3rd John Henson and Alan Heath. Winners on handicap Marjorie Morris and Bill Turner.

Thursday, March 26: 1st Barrie Jenkins and Vanessa Beacham, 2nd Stuart Davies and Teresa Griffiths, 3rd John Evans and Eileen Williams. Winners on handicap Jan Watts and Tegwen Bond.

Friday, March 27: North/South winners John Beard and Deborah Davies, East/West winners Dilys Bowser and Glyn Williams.

Particular congratulations to Jan and Tegwen, the Thursday winners on handicap. They only began to learn bridge last September. A real achievement for them both, and an accolade to the excellent lessons delivered within the club by John Evans.

Regular club nights take place on Wednesday and Friday evenings at Nolton Church Hall. Play is scheduled to commence at 7pm so it helps if players arrive at least 10 minutes early.

On Thursday afternoons at 2pm, also at Nolton Church Hall, there is a gentle duplicate session. Master points are now awarded but it remains a relaxed occasion where players enjoy their bridge.

Further information can be obtained by calling Steve Burgoyne on 01656 661968, John Evans on 01656 880372 or David Newman on 01656 649138.

Members can also take advantage of the 'tip of the week' on the club website, primarily to assist new players and improvers - this can be found under bridge lessons in the left hand menu.

TG

THE BARRY & DISTRICT MEN'S SKITTLE LEAGUE

DIVISION 1:

49'ers.(P.Solowyk 28) 278, West End Stars (M.Cooper 28) 267; Bunker Boys (K.Hewitson 31) 280, Geest (L.Galsworthy 28) 263; Colcot Boys (M.Elliott 32) 281, Blue Monkey (T.Cloude, R.Fox 29) 255; Ex-Servicemen (T.C Acacia 32) 274, Cavaliers (A.Rowles 26) 249; Mighty Dockers (P.Burrouches 28) 270, Park Lads (D.Morgan 27) 264.

Division 2:

Abercrete (J.Arnold 31) 297, Road Runners (B.Blow 32) 277; Barry Social (M.Burrows 27) 233, Willie Wombles (A.Wilson 29) 251; Posties (B.Usher, I.Jones 29) 290, Exiles (A.Ladner 30) 292; Sea View (T.Stokes 32) 320, Witchill Poachers (S.Rogers 30) 279; Tynewydd Lads (D.Curtis 31) 282, BP Breakaways (J.Rees 32) 292; Witchill Wizards (C.Casado 45) 357, Buffs Exiles (G.Conibear 34) 358.

Division 3:

Billy Whizz 270, The Alternatives 273; C.U.D. (P.Palmer 26) 259, Billy Whizz (J.Fallguia 26) 259; Commanchies '2'(N.Watkins 31 271,'H'Bells (B.Crockford 31) 291; Castle Boys (J.Champ 30) 292, KP Monkeynuts (M.Aldui 30) 280; West End Fliers (J.Gill 25) 259, Commanchies '2'(W.Palmer, E.Sullivan 25) 267.

HR

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Inter cruise to victory

ON a filthy wet and cold morning, Barry Inter under-12s put a dominant performance in against Marshfield.

The boys put in a faultless first half, and were rewarded with a well executed goal by James in the third minute.

Connor swept away Marshfield's threat several times, with some fine tackling by Josh and Charlie, while Dan and Aron were given a hard time down the wings but dealt with it admirably.

It was only a matter of time until we scored again, and Jacob doubled the lead on 19 minutes. The midfield engine was well oiled with Iestyn, Lloyd, Jack and Eski upsetting play and controlling the game.

In the second half we had to contend with wind and rain, and Sion was brought on in defence and given the unenviable task of trying to contain their number 5.

He was given a torrid time and turned this way and that, but managed to deal with what was thrown at him.

Iestyn saw a penalty saved, but the boys up front, James and Jacob, were well into their stride by now, and Lloyd made it 3-0.

Iestyn then grabbed a fourth and though Marshfield were given a glimmer of hope with a consolation goal it wasn't enough.

Well done boys, a fully deserved win.

DD

Is your house ready for spring selling season? – ASKS EWEMOVE.COM

WITH the clocks gone forward and the lion's share of Easter eggs waiting to be eaten, we can now safely declare that the 'Spring Selling Season' is upon us.

Everyone knows that the longer days and (supposedly!) warmer weather bring out the buyers, so make sure you have your property in order before it is marketed – this is the advice from rapidly growing sales and letting agent, EweMove.com.

With this in mind, local EweMove Director, Karen, has put together a checklist to guide you through the most important elements of having your home ready for sale in spring.

Top spring property selling tips:

Spring clean: Homes need to be fresh for this traditional selling season – if you don't have time to carry out this essential annual chore yourself, consider employing a professional cleaner to get your property up to selling standard.

Fresh feel: Think about re-staging your spaces for spring and summer, with a focus on natural light, lighter fabrics and seasonal touches including fresh flowers.

Clear the clutter: Prepare for a viewing seriously. Take the time to de-clutter, keep rooms tidy and minimise personal possessions such as photos, as purchasers are trying to picture themselves living in your home. The idea is to demonstrate that this is an attractive, functional home.

Improve your home: Don't gut and redecorate the entire property, but do fix what is obviously damaged. Fill in cracks, do essential repairs and decorate if there has been a leak or staining. Keep colour schemes neutral.

But don't overspend: Buyers often like to make their mark, so don't waste your money on trying to second guess what they like. If the kitchen is tired, don't spend money on replacing it – there is little chance you will make your money back. Don't replace carpets, but do get them cleaned.

Karen, who was born and bred in Barry, is very knowledgeable on the local property market, and comments: "As long as sellers take the time and care in preparing their property for market, we are confident that we will find them a buyer as we pride ourselves on working harder than any other agent to deliver results.

"We are there to help them every step of the way – from providing amazing photographs and 3D floor plans, to carefully crafted marketing descriptions.

"Customers are not required to pay any upfront fees or sneaky hidden charges along with a 'No Sale – No Fee' promise. Our fantastic 'Ewe-reka' computer system - the world's only automated sales and letting solution operating a 24/7 service - makes sure that any viewing, enquiry or purchase offer is never lost."

The highly innovative system enables prospective buyers and tenants to book their own viewing appointments online without need to call an agent, or make time to visit an office.

Similarly, when a tenant or house buyer chooses a viewing convenient for them, they are emailed and sent text reminders "from the manager" by the system, with a reminder the day before. This helps confirm arrangements with viewers, and all the details are handily stored on their phone. They can then apply or make an offer by phone, or online, 24 hours a day from the comfort of their own home.

"Making it quick and simple helps everybody and our customers love it."

According to Karen, with 95 per cent of buyers now searching online, EweMove.com lists properties on all of the major property portals, which generate 183 million buyers' searches each month.

"This, combined with EweMove.com's 'Mammoth Marketing' approach," she continues, "means that sellers' homes get more interest, more quickly.

For further information please contact Karen on 07976585153 or visit ewemove.com.

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Fitted Kitchen, Gas Central Heating
NO CHAIN
Barry Branch

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Detatched
Four Bedrooms
Sea Views
Conservatory
NO CHAIN
Barry Branch

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Viewing Essential
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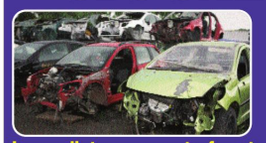
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required to manage our central cutting and packaging facility at Maesteg

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Filco is continually in the UK Top 50 Independent grocery companies and is regularly listed as finalist for retail industry awards. If you want a rewarding challenge and opportunity to develop your skills and achievement in a growing company please send your CV to Ian Hunt, Filco Supermarkets Ltd, 19 Boverton Road , Llantwit Major , CF611XZ or email jobs@filco.co.uk.

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Aberthaw Power Station shutdown for 16 weeks. Any sort of accommodation is required for men coming to site. Contact Office Manager Jenny Webb on 01446 750271 ext 2675 or Clive Thorne on ext 2277.

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Family Notices

COSLETT

Gwynneth (née Williams)

Died March 28, 2015, aged 98 years, in Scotland.
Formerly of 19 and 1 Park Crescent, Barry.
Beloved mother of Eleanor and greatly loved by all her family in Wales, England and Scotland.

WEAVER

Bertha

Peacefully at Llandough Hospital on Sunday, March 22, aged 94 years. Bertha, formerly of Min Y Mor sadly passed away. Wife of the late John Weaver, mother of Margaret, Richard, Jeremy and Philip. A loving grandmother and great grandmother.
Funeral to take place at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry on Tuesday, April 7 at 2pm.
Family flowers only, donations can be made at the service to WRVS. Further enquiries to Lyndsay Ellis @ The Vale Funeral Service, 01446 407962.

LLOYD

Reginald Albert Edward (Ted)

Died at Llandough Hospital on March 24, beloved husband of Fay. Father of Rosalind and Stuart, father-in-law of Evan, loving grandfather to Sara and Jason and future grandson-in-law Troy - a true gentleman.
Loved by all who knew him and will be very sadly missed.
Resting at A.G. Adams and Son Funeral Directors until the funeral service at All Saints Church, Barry at 10am on Thursday, April 9, followed by interment at Barry Cemetery, flowers may be sent to the funeral home.

MOON

Stephen John

Peacefully on Wednesday, March 25 at his home in Porthcawl, with family and friends. Stephen, dearly loved husband of Madeleine, father of David, father-in-law of Melina, brother of Lynne.
Resting at Southlands Funeral Home until the service at All Saints Church, Victoria Avenue, Porthcawl on Wednesday, April 8 at 1.45pm, followed by cremation at Margam Crematorium at 3pm. Donations in lieu of flowers to M.N.D.A (Motor Neurone Disease Association). Cheques payable please to "U.C.L/F.T.D. research", PO Box 246, Northampton, NN1 2PR.
Further enquiries to Evan E Thomas & Sons, Southlands Funeral Home, South Road, Porthcawl, CF36 3DA, telphone 01656 783383.

SHIRLEY WILLIAMS

My lovely daughter, love you all my yesterdays and all my tomorrows.
From Mammy and family

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Public Notices

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Siteserv Recycling (SW) Ltd of Triple Crown House, off Llantwit Major Road, Llandow, CF71 7PB is applying for a change in an existing licence as follows:

To keep an extra **5** goods vehicles and **12** trailers at **Triple Crown House, off Llantwit Major Road, Llandow, CF71 7PB**

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

Anniversaries

ROZ and FRANK COUZENS

Happy 50th Wedding Anniversary
3.4.1965 - 3.4.2015

To our wonderful parents & grandparents on your special day.
All our love Richard, Julie, Ed & Will, Michael, Michele, Francine & Rob.
Thank you for always being there for us.
xxx

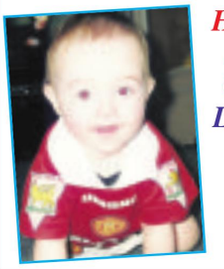
Birthdays

Happy Birthday
Don John
on 2 April
Best wishes from all your friends at **The GEM**

Look who's 18!

Matthew Bennett
on 1 April

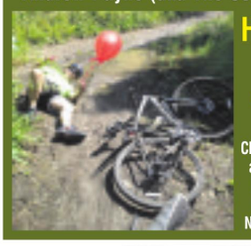
We've always been proud of you. Now more than ever, our hearts are bursting with pride, because you've grown into a remarkable person, so full of love, caring and joy.



Happy 18th birthday, dear boy!
Love Mum, Dad and family
xxxx

'GET ON YOUR BIKE'

Andrew Payne (aka The Computerman)



Happy 50th Birthday
on 7th April
Lots of love,
Christina, David, Lisa and granddaughter Esme, Catherine, Chantelle, Liam, Nathan and Petey xx

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Thank You

I would like to say
Thank You

to all my very special friends at The GEM (past & present) for making my retirement party such a fantastic night & making me feel so special. Thank you for all your best wishes, flowers, gifts, vouchers & retirement card that I will treasure always, also thank you to Andrew for your beautiful flowers.

I have enjoyed the last 30 years at The GEM and have so many happy memories. Thank you Caroline for being there and for all your support over the last 21 years, but much more than that being a true friend. Thank you to Sir Ray Tindle, Wendy Craig & Simon Parsonson for your best wishes & gifts. I love you all.

Margaret x

Birthdays

Happy 18th Birthday
to our beautiful daughter
Lydia Allison Parsons
on 5 April

All our love, Mum, Dad, Charlie & all your family xxx

Shannen Daw

Happy 18th Birthday
for April 3
Lots of love, Mum, Dad, Becca and all the family XXX

SIMON MARK TATCHELL

Happy 50th Birthday
for April 6th
Love from Mum & Dad, son Mark & Ann & Peter xxx

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VALE UNDER-15S SQUAD TRAIN AT RAF ST ATHAN

RECENTLY, the Vale of Glamorgan Schools under-15s rugby squad visited MoD St Athan to undertake some team building activities with a difference.

The squad were preparing for their games in the oldest schoolboy rugby competition in the world, the Dewar Shield, and they were going into the second stage of the format.

The purpose of the visit to MoD St Athan was to help the lads to develop the skills in team working, leadership, problem solving and communication. These are essential skills for the Royal Air Force (RAF) and desirable attributes for any aspiring rugby side.

RAF Physical Training Instructors (PTIs) are highly trained and motivated to ensure that the young team get the best out of their time.

Mental fitness and physical fitness go hand-in-hand to produce successful sportsmen (or women) and following an introduction to the day the PTI, Cpl Rob Simon, quickly got the team to work with some problem solving challenges which also acted as warm up ice breakers.

Cpl Simon discussed the characteristics of high performing teams and how the players could transfer their training with the RAF into a match situation.

The squad then progressed onto the low ropes, which is an indoor obstacle course where the skills identified earlier where put into action.

The team worked really well together and the shared experience helped tighten the bond between the boys which transferred into a great win in their next game over RGC West, a north Wales district, 36-14.

The squad are looking forward to the challenges ahead and putting the skills from the team building day at MoD St Athan into action on the rugby pitch.

JB

Brynhill ladies say farewell to Peter

AFTER the AGM, the lady golfers at Brynhill held a presentation to Peter Hayman, retiring president, thanking him for all the support he has given to the ladies over the last 10 years.

Glynis Gould, lady captain and artist, gave a farewell gift to Peter, a caricture of him outside the clubhouse.

The ladies of Brynhill Golf Club had a very informative talk by Sue Hamer taking us through a beginners guide to tracing your family history.

Start by talking to your relations, collecting birth, marriage, death certificates, civil registrations and census records, all a guide to your past - many of these are online. We should be able to trace back to the early1800s using these recources.

A small charge was made for the evening and a raffle held, all donations going to LATCH.

Competion results: March 10 - winner Robbie Lee 28points, runner-up Sue Holland 20; March 17 winner Carole Allen 23points, runner-up Audrey Phillips 22; March 23 winner Maria Gentile 23points, runner up Diane Tapscott 21, over back two from Claire Herbert.

CH

ABOVE: Glynis Gould presents retiring president Peter Hayman with his caricature, and BELOW: Members get tracing their family history!

Teams in chess action

WHILE I have personally been away, the Barry Chess Club continues to play league matches.

I am still awaiting the result of the Camelots match away to Nelson but I note that championship rivals Cardiff Castles only managed a draw with the Caerphilly Kings.

This leaves the Camelots 3.5 points behind the Castles with a match in hand and six points behind the North Cardiff Woodpushers with two matches in hand. With only four games left for the Camelots they can almost feel the title.

The Quarks payed host to Bridgend A on Monday while the Gambits travelled the opposite way on Tuesday to take on the Bridgend B side, and both matches ended in a 3-2 victory for the Bridgend side.

For the Gambits nothing has changed much in their division as mid-table beckons. However, for the Quarks, the loss could signal the end of their promotion push.

They now remain in third place some two points above the Pontypridd Phoenix and the Cardiff Cavaliers, but have played a game more. This division is so close it could go down to the wire with the Quarks final game against league leaders Cardiff Dragons vital for both teams.

The Barry Chess Club meets at 7.30pm each Monday at the West End Club. St. Nicholas Road, Barry CF62 6QY. The club is open to players of all standards; whether you are interested in playing competitive chess or just the occasional friendly games.

New players are very welcome to just turn up on the night but if you contact one of the club members through the website we can explain what is happening on the night you have in mind, and arrange for someone to greet you on your arrival.

For more details visit our website at barrychessclub.yolasite.com.

PHIL JONES

Barrivale bridge club results

LATEST results from Barrivale Bridge Club for March 24:

First Kay Dyer and Diana Kendrick 68.75 per cent; second Helen Jordan and Jane Brook 62.50; third Alan Jones and Lyn Matthews 53.75.

Kay Dyer and Diana Kendrick also won on handicap.

New members are always welcome at Barrivale. A partner may be arranged if required. If you would like to join us ring 01446 418380 or 01446 733425 or call at the Pioneer Hall, Beryl Road, Barry, on Tuesdays at 7pm.

DR

Bowling Club to hold open day

ARE you ready to start the new outdoor bowling season?

Barry Central Bowling Club, considered to be so easy to get to due to its central location in Gladstone Gardens, looks forward to meeting potential new members.

A spokesman explained: "We have banished the winter gloom and our members are eagerly awaiting the outdoor bowling season.

"With the start of spring and our official opening day on Saturday April 18, all we need to complete the perfect picture is to give a warm welcome to prospective new members.

"We are one of the oldest bowling clubs in Barry, founded in 1909.

"The club has a proud tradition of providing first-class lawn bowling for the local community.

"This year we will be offering free tailor-made coaching courses by accredited coaches to all new members, so that you can learn to bowl with confidence.

"Playing bowls can mean many things to people.

"It is enjoyed by both the young and the not so young, males and females; it reaches out to members of the commuity from all walks of life.

"It can be a competitive sport, a therapeutic recreation or a relaxing social pastime. Our members enjoy a good social life with like-minded people of all ages.

"We have a first-rate club house, where coffee mornings, meetings and other functions are held. We have a licensed bar as well!"

Telephone today for more details: ladies, Mrs J Morgan, telephone 412976; men, Mr J Wathes, telephone 719442.

JW

Latest Barry & District league results and tables

CRIB DIVISION 1:

League table: Wyndham Cons 178, Liberals 176, Cadoxton Cons 174, Moors Boys 171, West End Wanderers 164, West End 160, Rhoose Social 155, Railway 142.

SKITTLES DIVISION 1:

Sea View B 5, Barries Boys 2; King William XII 6, Liberals A 1; Allsorts 5, Cambrian Flyers 2; Slammers 2, Rugby Club 5; Rhoose Social C 6, West End D 1; Runway Club 0, Rhoose Social A 7; Liberals C 2, Rhoose Social B 5; Rhoosters 3, West End C 4.

League table: Sea View B 119, West End C 114.5, Allsorts 100, King William XII 98, West End D 86.5, Slammers 86, Barries Boys 83.5, Rugby Club 82, Rhoose Social A 80.5, Rhoose Social B 74, Rhoosters 73.5, Rhoose Social C 63.5, Liberals A 59, Runway Club 54.5, Cambrian Flyers 54, Liberals C 52.5.

SNOOKER DIVISION 1:

League table: Harbour B 90, Savoy A 87, West End C 70, Cadoxton Cons B 69, Cadoxton Cons Z 63, Rhoose Social B 56, Rhoose Social C 55, Harbour A 52, Wyndham Cons A 52, Savoy B 43, Penarth Cons B 42, Wyndham Cons C 41.

SNOOKER DIVISION 2:

League table: Railway A 86, Market Street C 68, Railway B 65, Market Street B 63, Liberators 62, Penarth Cons D 62, Services Social B 61, Cadoxton Cons A 55, Sully Sports A 55, Penarth Cons A 54, *Railway C 42, West End B 42 (* = points deducted).

All league & cup fixtures and results at www.barryleagues.co.uk or Facebook - search for 'barry leagues'.

JW

JUNIORS' OPEN DAY

THE juniors at Dinas Powys LTC officially welcomed in the 2015 tennis season with a very successful open day recently.

The youngsters not only played the traditional game but also played with balloons on their rackets.

They faced the fearsome ball machine and they had a chance to soak the junior captains, Luke and Amelia Davidson, in the stocks.

New trophies were awarded to the winners of the summer club tournament and each child went away with an Easter egg.

The summer season at Dinas Powys LTC means junior morning is now 10am-12noon every Saturday morning. There will be fun games, new skills and match play, as well as the very popular tuck shop.

Children of all ages and abilities are welcome to come along as the club is always looking to get more youngsters playing tennis. **MM**

Articles For Sale

ADVERTISE HERE £12 inc. VAT - box for 2 weeks. To take advantage of this offer simply either send in your description along with a cheque for the appropriate amount made payable to 'The Glamorgan GEM' at The GEM, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL or telephone us with your wording by 12 noon Tuesday. All major credit cards accepted. Tel 01446 774484. Advert must contain a residential land line telephone number. You may alter your advert as items are sold. **Sorry no refunds are given.**

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5ft wide x 4ft high x 18 inches deep
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with 2 chairs, buyer collects, move forces sale.
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Hallstand - £10
Electric Mobility Chair - £150
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Buyer collects 14

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Exercise foot cycle everlast £20
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01446 773282 14

JSTKD shine at championships!

THE TAGB English Tae Kwon Do Championships were quite literally a golden event in JSTKD's calendar this year.

Held in Worcester on March 22, the event saw Vale-based JSTKD Martial Arts & Fitness come home with two new English champions as well as a further two bronze medals in the individual events and yet another gold in the tag team event.

The first winner of the day was Menna Burmingham who gave a truly outstanding performance to win gold in the Girls Red Belt Patterns category.

Menna beat very stiff opposition in style with her sharpness and precision leaving the judges no choice but to award her the top prize.

This is an especially timely win as Menna will be taking her black belt grading in April and chose her examination pattern as the one to impress with.

Proving her versatility, Menna then went on to take the bronze in the girls' Red Belt Sparring, this time swapping poise for power to claim her medal.

For the adults, Chris Edwards was on top form as he overcame some tough competitors on his way to the final. Chris wasted no time in out-manoeuvring his opponent, deftly using some particularly fast punches to convincingly take the title and see him become men's English welterweight champion.

The Edwards family were on a winning streak as son, Josh, put on a great display of moves in the boys' Black Belt Peewee division and well deservedly came away with the bronze.

Over in the tag team sparring, Alan Li added another gold to the club's haul as part of the Welsh Warriors who were competing in the boys' Cadets Black Belt event.

Special mention also goes to adult and junior team members Lynne Doel, Rhys Doel, Sean Edwards, Gabe Wilfred and Emily Doogue, who competed well in their respective patterns and sparring divisions.

Gabe had the dubious honour of managing to floor two judges in the course of his fight – he pulled off a nimble sidestep to avoid his opponent but in doing so tripped up one judge who then took another with him!

Rhys Doel, competing in the boys' Lightweight Black Belt event, faced a very difficult opponent but despite not quite overcoming him, put in a fantastic performance and remained determined to the last point.

For anyone who would like try Tae Kwon Do for themselves, JSTKD has clubs throughout the Vale for all abilities and ages from three years to adults. Please see www.jstkd.co.uk for full details.

VW

Bradley lands his hat-trick!

BRADLEY Gibbs, who works for Aberthin trainer Tim Vaughan, was in good form at the windswept Glamorgan Hunt Point-To-Point Steeplechases at Ystradowen last Saturday, riding three winners and three seconds from his six rides.

Bradley took the opening members' race on Gary Llewellyn's course winner Captain Scarlett, a nine-year-old bay gelding, trained by Gary's son Robbie.

Captain Scarlett, who jumped for fun, was made an odds-on favourite in a field of four runners and drew away in the closing stages to beat the French-bred Beau De Tabel by eight lengths.

The second leg of his hat-trick was initiated when the syndicate-owned Medicinal Compound scored by five lengths from the pacemaking grey Sangfroid.

It may have been a mixed open (ladies and gentlemen riders) but as often in these races all five runners were partnered by male riders.

The third leg of his treble came when Miss Claire Sheriff's six-year-old bay mare, My Coranna, bought at the Ascot Sales last November, came home a 20 lengths winner from Fire Sale of the restricted.

My Corranna is trained by Bradley's father David Gibbs. Firesale's rider Nick Williams, from Ogmore, had earlier won the aged maiden race on C Me In Oz, an eight-year-old bay gelding which took up the running four fences from home to win by 30 lengths from Wood Park (Bradley Gibbs) in the fastest time of the day.

Williams, who trains the horse for Miss Julie McLean and fish and chip shop owner Damian Chubb, said: "I haven't had the horse very long but he's pretty straightforward to train."

Merthyr Mawr's Jonathan Tudor, who celebrated his 50th birthday earlier in the week, saddled his sixth winner of the season when his seven-year-old chestnut gelding, Tiger Rag, took the confined race by eight lengths from the Bradley Gibbs-partnered Tico.

Cowbridge's Byron Moorcroft took the young horse maiden on seven-year-old Boss Of The Moss who led from pillar to post in the testing conditions to win by 15 lengths from the Bradley Gibbs-partnered Overtoujay.

Boss Of The Moss, who is by Alderbrook-Star Bui, is owned by distant cousins Mr D Williams and H Williams from Blackmill, near Bridgend.

It is the first horse they have ever owned and David Williams, who farms in the area, also trains it. A delighted Moorcroft said: "I knew the horse would stay, so I made all the running and the tactics paid off."

TIM'S DOUBLE

Aberthin's Tim Vaughan landed a double at Uttoxeter Races last Saturday.

His eight-year-old Akula, confidently ridden by Alan Johns, took the two mile handicap hurdle coming home 28 lengths ahead of Lean Burn and his seven-year-old Ashford Wood, partnered by Michael Byrne, won the two mile four furlongs hurdle by one and a quarter lengths from Bowie.

Akula went off the 4-1 favourite in a field of 10 runners and the top weighted Asford Wood was a 11-2 shot.

BRIAN LEE

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Brian's PTP Blast from the Past – 1980

THIS week, Brian Lee – thanks to his many press cutting books – travels back some 35 years in time to 1980.

Under the heading 'Housewife Has Easy Victory' this is what I had to say about Llancarfan trainer Evan Williams' mother:

"Llancarfan's steeplechasing mum Mary Williams scored an easy win in the ladies' race at the Carmarthenshire Hunt Steeplechases on Saturday.

Riding Nat Gibson's 10-year-old bay gelding *Beige Prince*, the 35-year-old housewife and mother of two made nearly all the running to win by 15 lengths from the grey *Druid* with *ACW* a neck away in third place."

The Monmouthshire mare *Lady Pen*, partnered by Andrew James, landed a gamble in the men's open event.

Backed from 20-1 to 4-1, *Lady Pen* came home eight lengths ahead of *Davin Moor*.

Gwent rider Roscombe Jones chalked up his first winner when riding his mother's *Lord Belvedere* to a 15 length victory in the restricted open race. Roscombe, aged 18, a self-employed agricultural contractor, only started riding in point-to-points last year.

Cowbridge's John Llewellyn took the adjacent hunts' race on Peter Thomas's *Red Wasp*.

John Llewellyn riding at the Golden Valley meeting won the men's open on *Master Straight* while under the heading 'Another Open Win For Fitz', I wrote: "Rose Harry's 14-year-old *Fitz* – the *Mac Vidi* of Welsh point-to-point racing – chalked up his 24th victory at the Brecon Hunt Steeplechases on Saturday.

"Ridden by Bassaleg farrier Tim Rooney, *Fitz* stormed home well clear of ex-steeplechaser *Old Vince* in division three of the Open race. *Fitz*'s win was some consolation for Rooney, who in the previous race when partnering the strongly fancied *Canhe,* failed to catch the Monmouthsire mare *Lady Pen*. Twenty-two year-old Joan Stephens, of Penhow, near Chepstow, who was having only her second ride in public, landed the ladies' open race on her father's nine-year-old *Bell-Amys*."

At the Llangibby Hunt Steeplechases this year, where St Athan's John Thomas won the maiden race on his grandfather Jack Thomas's *Cottage Chest*, John Llewellyn was successful on *Proud Prince* and *Master Straight*.

My report on the Curre Point-To-Point read: "Rose Harry's *Fitz* was a controversial winner of the open race. The rider of *Henley Fair*, the runner-up, Brian Hughes, thought that he had just got up on the line and rode straight into the winner's enclosure. But the judge ruled that *Henley Fair* had been beaten by half-a-length."

One bookmaker, obviously of the same opinion as Hughes, laid 2-1 against *Fitz* being awarded the race.

Fitz who was ridden by Tim Rooney, was winning the event for the third year in succession. Local rider Richard Hambleton was in fine form, winning the members' race on *Late Guest* and the restricted open on *Flying Boy*.

That man, Cowbridge farmer John Llewellyn, was in the news again. In my preview piece for the Glamorgan Hunt Steeplechases at St Hilary I wrote: "All eyes will be on Cowbridge farmer John Llewellyn tomorrow. Last weekend at the Pembrokeshire he bagged a treble with *Darwin*, *Knight's Queen* and *Lucky Mating* and now shares the lead in the national point-to-point riders' championship with Ian McKie of Bicester who has ridden 13 winners.

"Llewellyn, the reigning Welsh champion rider, needs only one more win to equal Tim Rooney's Welsh record of 14 wins in a season."

As it turned out, Llewellyn drew a blank but Bridgend farmer Dillwyn Thomas had plenty of cause for celebration as he 'chalked up his 100th win as an owner when *Cefn Soloman* won the Jeep – Christi's open race'. *Cefn Soloman*, ridden by Paul Hamer, came home four lengths clear of *Border Merchant*. At this meeting, the Vale's Robert Oakes took the members' race on *Barvic* and Rosemary White was successful on *Starnello* in the ladies' open race.

It was at the Llangeinor Hunt races that John Llewellyn set a new Welsh record of 15 wins in a season when winning the men's open race on Diane Harries's *Knights Queen*. Backers of seven-year-old bay mare *Pentyrch Event* at this meeting thought they were bound to collect, when the horse that was leading it by a distance, *Red Account,* took the wrong course and jumped a fence too many.

But the stewards ruled that the error was caused by a fence steward who failed to doll off the fence and they allowed *Red Account* to keep the race.

More confusion followed in the next race – the women's open – when Shan Morgan riding the grey *Shesheen* missed out the last fence.

The Ystrad at Llantwit Major saw the close of the 1980 Welsh season and David Turner, the reigning national point-to-point riders' champion, made a 560 mile round trip from Suffolk and was rewarded with a double.

David took the restricted open with *Gradwood* and the men's open with *Keep*. The Adjacent race went to *Henley Fair* (Brian Hughes), the women's open to *National Clover* (Joan Vaughan), the Members' race to *Tabacco* (Brian Price) and the Maiden to *Yester Year* (Mike Williams).

John Llewellyn retained his Welsh riders' title and the women's title also went to the reigning champion Shan Morgan of *Mandryka* fame.

Tonyrefail's Brian Hughes took the South Wales and Monmouthshire area award with *Henley Fair*.

You can e-mail your point-to-point memories/photographs to brianlee4@virginmedia.com or phone02920 736438.

BRIAN LEE

Funding boost for games sector

THE Welsh Government has announced funding support for the next two years for the Wales Games Development Show to promote Welsh talent and expertise.

Economy Minister Edwina Hart AM said funding support will ensure the show will remain a key, stand alone, annual event in the UK Games calendar and will build on its successes to date.

"The Welsh Government is committed to developing the Welsh Games sector which is a rapidly growing, high profile, high value element of the creative industries. We have considerable talent in Wales which is fostered by our further and higher education institutions and have a growing cluster of highly successful companies working in a very competitive global market," she commented.

"I am pleased the Welsh Government is supporting the Wales Development Show, which attracts hundreds of delegates every year and provides a forum for the development of Welsh Games businesses and exchange of creative ideas within the UK and internationally.

"It is also a great platform to promote what Wales can offer companies in terms of a business location."

The Barry and District ladies skittle results

LATEST results are:

First division: Allsorts (C Griffiths 31) 280, Cigar Ladies (C Colman 29) 272; Coppers (G Wride 36) 348, Baker's Dozen (S Howe 33) 325; S V Gals (C Gaffney 31) 294, Family and Friends (J Crompton 33) 259; Barry Stars (T Lambett 37) 340, Family Affair (S Evans, Sandra Wilson 33) 346; Colcot Ladies (H Edwards 27) 240, Space Finders (L Jones) 271.

Second division: Strikers (L Goodwin 27) 2434, Cad Con Fillies (T Clements 28) 213; Roller Coasters (L Thomas 24) 227, Breakaways (P Thurston, C Smith 21) 208; Witchill Widows (L Young 37), 323, Rhoose Starlights (J Ockwell 31) 290; Divas (C Miller 27) 218, Witchill Weebies (M Smith 23) 228; After Eights (P Bryant 31) 283, SV Lights (P Beadle, L Norris 29) 282; Vixens (L Galsworthy 27) 245, Castle Bandits (S King 31) 279; Clickies (B Jodrell 31) 306, Bobby's Girls (B Roe, B Macdonald 33) 313.

Third division: Rhoose Ravers (C I Davidson 26) 244, Etcetera (M Grasby 27) 257; Jolly Dollies (E Jackson 28) 218, Merry Makers (C Morse, S Hawker 26) 246; Airways Angels (J thomas 28) 219, Friends and Neighbours (J Parry, L Williams 22) 202; Westenders (S Woodfield 26) 217, Persuaders (L Organ 23) 216; Hill Billies (J Lambeth 32) 288, Dolly Mixtures (P Brigham 31) 305; Rugby Triers (S Watts 25) 223, Lil's Devils (J H Jones 26) 227;Witchill Wanderers (S Raynolds 32) 304, SV Ladies (H Protheroe 33) 317.

Fourth division: Odd Bods (T Perry 25) 198, La Belles (C Knight 27) 255; Twilights (S Ellis 23) 211; Boozy Birds (S Rudefort 26) 188; Off The Rails (C Griffiths 26) 228, BFFs (A Finn 21) 167.

Fifth Division: Barry Ravers (K Gernon 25) 162, Aristocats (T Weston, B Tamlyn 23) 190; Smurfs 9J Hakeswell 25) 198, Guardian Angels (S Clarke 29) 213; Hell Raisers (Nugent 27) 194, Socialites (P Todd 28) 183.

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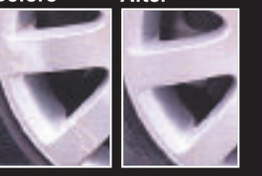

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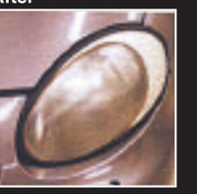

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AFTER ISRAEL MASTERCLASS... CAN COLEMAN'S WALES MAKE IT ALL THE WAY TO EURO 2016?

GOING into Saturday's game with Israel, Wales would have hoped to contain their hosts, who had set off at a pace in Group B and who had not lost competitively at home in nearly two and a half years.

That Wales emerged comprehensive 3-0 winners, having dictated the game and rarely found themselves troubled by the Israelis, was a welcome surprise, Chris Coleman's team delivering one of, if not their finest performance to date, to return to the top of their qualifying group - at least until Belgium edged past Israel 1-0 in Jerusalem on Tuesday, leaving both teams tied on 11 points, Belgium topping the group on goal difference.

Much of the pre-match talk centred around (who else) Gareth Bale, and the woes he is currently experiencing in the harsh environment of the Bernabeu, as Real Madrid fans use him as a scapegoat for the team's recent struggles.

Bale had been seen smiling and laughing at training in the week, a clear indicator that the man pivotal to Wales' qualifying hopes was happier in the bosom of his Welsh teammates, and enjoying a chance to do what he does best without a baying gaggle of Spaniards jeering his every move.

The opening half of this encounter was cagey, but with Wales edging it in terms of opportunities created; Bale, however, seemed a little off-pace, taking too many touches and forcing the action, perhaps a knock-on effect from the pressures of the day job creeping into his international game.

However, the breakthrough came just before halftime - Bale's flick on met Aaron Ramsey's head, and the ball looped over the Israeli keeper and into the net, the goal seeming to have inflicted a psychological blow on an already underperforming (and disappointing) Israeli team.

Wales doubled their lead when Bale's beautifully struck free-kick left the keeper with no chance, and though Israel seemed to be creeping back into the game, their faint hopes were dealt a fatal blow when Bale notched his second in the 77th minute.

The impact such a result will have had on the group is significant, on a day which saw Bosnia grab a vital three points with a 3-0 win in Andorra, and the Belgians shake off their post-World Cup malaise with an ominous and clinical 5-0 demolition of Cyprus.

It's the Belgians who will be Wales' next opponents in Cardiff on June 12, and the enormity of the task in terms of getting a result will not have been lost on Coleman and his squad, despite the well-earned and deserved point they brought back from Brussels last November.

However, despite the fact that Marc Wilmots' men seem to be hitting their stride, Wales will have plenty to worry the Belgians, not least the way they totally outplayed an Israeli team who had taken three wins from their opening three games.

Tactically Coleman had it spot on, the 5-3-2 formation giving Wales both defensive strength and numbers on the counter-attack, with Bale, shorn of the responsibility of leading the line, allowed free reign to run amok.

There were standout performances all over the pitch, while the late introduction of striker Sam Vokes after his serious knee injury, and his lively performance, was a heartening sight to see, and provides competition in an area where Wales lack true quality.

There is still much to do, another five games to shape Wales' hopes of qualifying for Euro 2016, but with three of these games at home, their destiny is very much in their own hands; indeed, to be sitting in such a lofty position at this point is encouraging, and a positive result in June may very well push the levels of optimism - and expectation - even higher.

If they do this, then we may indeed dare to dream - and watching Wales in a major finals will become a reality!

GARETH JAMIESON

THE ATHLETIC WHITEWASH LACKLUSTRE PONTYPOOL

ON a blustery day of misty rain it was determined and pragmatic play throughout the game by visitors Bridgend Athletic that gave them what was to prove to be a comfortable victory against distinctly lacklustre opponents in once mighty Pontypool.

At the beginning of the day Pontypool were sitting in fifth place in the SWALEC Championship while the Athletic were in ninth with a couple of games in hand over their opponents.

The early exchanges had all the hallmarks of a mid-table end of season affair as both teams made careless handling errors that resulted in a series of midfield scrums at which Pontypool had the upper-hand.

This allowed them to make early forays into Athletic territory. A charge down of Josh White's attempted clearance almost resulted in a try for 'Pooler' but the Athletic stood firm and turned the tide. Tom Morgan hacked downfield and though Pontypool cleared the initial danger the Athletic opened the scoring from the next lineout.

A smart tap down to scrum-half Jake Williams allowed him to pass the ball infield where centre Ryan Morgan half burst the defence. Sean Williams was in close support and from a quick ruck the ball was moved to the right where Ben Howe put Owen over for a try, well converted from near the touchline by White.

For the remainder of the half there was more to-ing and fro-ing between the 22s and both teams tried to employ the driving maul but to little effect on both sides.

Pontypool were still having the better of the territorial battle but showed little penetration against an Athletic defence that has stood up well all season in the close quarters battles against invariably bigger opponents.

The second half proved a completely different story as the visitors had the wind behind them and used it to good effect to keep Pontypool on the back foot and having to carry the ball from deep against the miserly defence.

Within three minutes the home team infringed at the breakdown and Josh White sent the ball between the posts to extend the lead. Only seconds later a collision laid Pontypool centre Marc Thorley out and quick thinking by Ryan Owen earned the gratitude of the home team as he intervened to turn his opponent onto his side as the medics ran on.

Shortly after Tom Morgan ripped the ball off his opponent and fed Howe, who surged forward 20 metres where Pontypool infringed. White's penalty attempt was just short as he slipped on addressing the ball.

Now the Athletic were getting on top in the scrums with Matthew Norman, Wayne Fooks and hooker Nathan Holman battling hard as the home team brought on fresh opponents in the front row and veteran No. 8 Griff Davies made strong runs from the base to allow Williams to move the ball wider.

Pontypool infringed at regular intervals and White was unerring in his execution on three further occasions to stretch the lead to 19 points. As their opponents tired the Ath upped the pace of the game.

The Apsee cousins Dan and Rod replace Fooks and the hard-working Davies and soon carried the attack to the Pontypool line. A driving maul appeared to be held up but the magnificent Howe seized the initiative and was driven over for the touchdown. This time White was unable to convert.

Howe and the industrious Deguerra were replaced by youngsters Lloyd Griffiths and Matthew Bennett. Soon after, tireless lock Tom Penry-Ellis intercepted a pass and was pulled down just short after a rampaging run.

Nevertheless within minutes a series of quick rucks provided an overlap that allowed Dan Howells to send in fellow wing Lindsay MacCausland for another score.

There was no further scoring and the visitors left the field to the praise of their small band of supporters while Pontypool fans were very disgruntled by their team's performance, the final score 29-0.

MD

ABOVE LEFT: Richard Underhill pushes through a tackle while ABOVE RIGHT: Gavin Reffell makes a break. PICTURES BY GARY CHAPPELL

Closer than the score suggests for Kenfig Hill's second team

KENFIG HILL 2nd XV continued their winning ways with a hard fought 30-0 victory over Llanharan with the score not reflecting the closeness of the match.

This was a good game of rugby between two sides who played with great commitment and skill in blustery conditions on the main pitch in Kenfig Hill.

The Mules included a mixture of experience and youth in their line up and showed that when they have a full squad available they can be a force to be reckoned with.

The Mules opened the scoring with a 30 metre penalty goal from outside half Nicky Giles, who was making a welcome return from injury. Llanharan were very much the equal in the early stages but a dropped pass in midfield when they were attacking was scooped up by Mules flanker Mark Astley, who showed a fine turn of pace to run in from 60 metres for a fine individual score. Giles added the conversion to put the Mules 10-0 up.

The game continued to be played at a good pace with both teams defying the conditions by keeping the ball in hand as much as possible.

The Mules' second try was scored by centre Matthew Burnell following a period of concerted pressure from the forwards to leave the halftime score 15-0 to Kenfig Hill.

The Kenfig Hill eight moved up a gear in the second period, especially at the set piece and kept Llanharan in their own half for most of the half.

The pressure paid off with No 8 Morgan Griffiths getting the touchdown for a pushover try from a scrum close to the Llanharan posts. The conversion was missed but a minute later Nicky Giles made amends with a well taken penalty goal from 45 metres to extend the lead to 23-0 to Kenfig Hill.

The final score of the game was by centre Dale Smith who bravely burst through the Llanharan defence to crash over from 10 meters. Lloyd Giles added the conversion to make the final score 30-0.

Llanharan must be given credit for the commitment for the full 80 minutes throughout the game. Their first-time tackling, especially in midfield, was a credit to them and they definitely deserved more out of the game.

However, Kenfig Hill always had the upper hand and there were numerous quality performances all over the park especially from hooker Joe Williams and centre Matthew Burnell.

The coaching team decided to award man of the match to flanker Mark Astley, whose tenacity and desire to play the game on the front foot greatly contributed to the victory.

Finally, credit should also be given to referee Carl Vincent, whose sympathetic approach to proceedings ensure the game flowed for the duration.

KENFIG HILL YOUTH 17 TONMAWR YOUTH 17

Kenfig Hill youth came away with a draw against third in the table Tonmawr, although it was a game they should have won, leading 17-0 with 15 minutes to play.

Due to injuries and non-availability Kenfig only had a bare 15; however, the coaches were relieved to hear the first XV's game was called off late morning, allowing Luke Griffiths and Lee Williams to join the travelling squad and add strength and experience.

Tonmawr started the better team having most of the possession, breaking the line on a number of occasions but they were unable to cross the whitewash due to a number of great tackles by Kyle Oram, Jonny Clatworthy and Cameron Rees.

Against the run of play Kenfig's forwards managed to turn the ball over just inside the Tonmawr half, and after some poor handling the ball fell to the feet of Luke Griffiths who showed great football skills to kick and chase past the full back and slide over for the first try of the game. Connor Tantum added the two points.

The remainder of the half was frantic end to end rugby with both teams having chances to score. Josh Rowlands was very unlucky on a couple of occasions not to hold onto the ball in the wet conditions with the try line in sight.

The impressive Tonmawr centre made a great break, only to be thwarted by the scrambling Kenfig defence.

The Kenfig Hill pack looked certain to score from a powerful driving maul only to be denied as Tonmawr were penalised for collapsing the maul in front of the posts. An easy three points for Connor Tantum ended the half, the score 10-0 to Kenfig Hill.

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